

Job-hunting tips for older workers

LI BUSINESS



DEAR CARRIE: I just read in Newsday that the jobless rate on Long Island dropped to 3.8 percent in June. Then why is it that after 17 months, I'm still looking for a full-time job? I would really like to see you devote a column to help those over 55 find a job.
— *Feeling Left Out*

DEAR FEELING: You got your wish.

Although the local job market has been strong, as an older worker you may be laboring against some discrimination. Here is what a recent U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission report said on the topic:

"The report finds that age discrimination remains too common and too accepted as outdated assumptions about older workers . . . persist, even though today's experienced workers are more diverse, better educated and working longer than previous generations," said the agency, which enforces anti-bias statutes in the workplace.

Jim Tabaczynski, co-founder of Nifty50s, a Cleveland-based online newsletter that focuses on jobseekers 50 and over, said older workers offer great advantages for employers as many are working well past traditional retirement age.

"You'll have them for at least 10 years and maybe more," he said. "In contrast, if you hire a 25- or 30-year-old, you are going to get them for three to five years



Despite a strong job market, a report by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission says age discrimination remains a common barrier for older workers. Networking is seen as key to the job search.

because they will move on."

And older workers already know the workplace dynamic, he said: "They know how business works. They know how to get through an organization."

But how do you navigate an employment landscape that isn't always welcoming to older workers?

For starters, join a group of like-minded individuals, like the Long Island Breakfast Club, whose services include resources for older workers, said the group's president, Valentina Janek.

"You need to be around people that have the same situation

so you can help each other," she said.

You should also be sure you're getting the most out of the professional social media site LinkedIn.

"The most likely way someone over 55 is going to find a new job is by networking like crazy," said Glory Borgeson, president of Borgeson Consulting Inc., a Chicago area career-consulting firm.

On LinkedIn, only connect to people you know, Borgeson said.

"People you don't know are unlikely to help you and make an introduction" to someone at a particular company, she said.

When you find a job you are interested in on LinkedIn, don't immediately apply for it, Borgeson said. Instead, type the company's name into the search field. A link to all its employees will come up. Click on "shared connection" beneath their names to find the people you both know, she said. Ask your connection for an introduction to the person at the targeted company. Tell him or her that you are interested in speaking to your common connection about the experience of working at the company.

"The person at the company you're interested in is more likely to say 'yes' to someone

they know who asks them a favor," she said.

Connections like this are vital. "The point is you want to have as many conversations with as many people as possible inside that company," she said. "The more conversations you have, the more likely you'll speak to someone who actually knows the hiring manager well and who might be willing to put in a good word for you," Borgeson said.

Once you speak with your intended target at the company, make sure you thank the common connection for the introduction, she said.

Here are two nuts-and-bolts pointers from Borgeson for getting noticed on LinkedIn:

Display your email address prominently. "This makes it easy for hiring managers or recruiters to contact you."

List a current position at the top of the experience section. "This is because recruiters with a paid LinkedIn account will filter out people who did the job 15 years ago," she said.

Call Carrie Mason-Draffen with workplace questions at 631-843-2791, or email her at carrie.mason-draffen@newsday.com. Your name and number won't be published. Not all questions can be answered; some may be edited for length and clarity.

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Hackers targeting millions of old fax machines globally



The Associated Press

LONDON — What could be less threatening than the old office fax machine? Nothing. That's precisely why it's used as a backdoor for hackers to get into an organization's network.

Check Point, a cyber security firm in Israel, said this week its research discovered security flaws in tens of millions of fax machines.

A cyber security firm in Israel said it found widespread security flaws. The hack works via images.

The hack works by sending an image file through the phone line — or a file that the fax machine thinks is an image file — and that is coded to contain malicious software. When a company receives the photo, the image is decoded and uploaded into the fax-printer's memory, allowing the hackers to take over the device and spreading the malicious code through the network.

"Many companies may not even be aware they have a fax machine connected to their network, but fax capability is built into many multifunction office and home printers,"

said Yaniv Balmas, group manager of security research at Check Point.

The researchers focused on Hewlett-Packard's OfficeJet Pro all-in-one fax printers — the global market leader for fax machines. Hewlett-Packard quickly fixed the issue — a patch is available on its support page — but the same vulnerabilities are present in most fax machines, including those by Canon and Epson.

Many machines are too old to even update. That means it will be difficult for companies to stop hackers from entering

their systems.

Globally, businesses use an estimated 45 million fax machines. Faxes are still widely used in health care, banking and law, sectors in which highly sensitive data are stored. In the U.S. medical sector, 75 percent of all communications are sent by fax.

To prevent organizations' networks from becoming compromised, experts recommend that companies check if their fax machines can be updated, or place fax devices on a secure network that is separate from the networks that carry sensitive information.