



THIS STORY HAS BEEN FORMATTED FOR EASY PRINTING

A job-search site for those who eschew retirement Website caters to a graying population

The Boston Globe

By Diane E. Lewis, Globe Staff | September 11, 2006

A new online site based in Wellesley is tapping into the graying segment of the labor market that's not quite ready to retire. RetirementJobs.com was launched in May by Tim Driver, former senior vice president of consumer products at Salary.com in Waltham, to provide a link between employers looking for experienced workers and workers eager for a second act.

To test his belief that there was a need for a jobs site for people 50 and over, Driver set up a website in 2005 that offered a questionnaire to anyone who keyed in the words ``retirement'' and ``jobs'' on Google.

``Essentially, we asked them to describe the ideal retirement job,'' said Driver, 40, of Wellesley. ``Flexibility was at the top of their list. They wanted jobs that provided security, and they wanted to give back. It was clear that there was an opportunity to help them by identifying companies in America that are positioning themselves as age-friendly.''

The number of workers over 50 is expected to increase 34 percent by 2012, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The number of workers under 50 will grow by only 3 percent during the same period.

``Almost 80 percent of baby boomers plan to work past retirement age,'' said Michael Smyer, dean of the Center on Aging & Work/Workplace Flexibility at Boston College.

Smyer said the trend began in the mid-1990s, when companies began shifting away from traditional employer-funded pensions to pension plans that were wholly or partly funded by workers. When employers began shying away from offering healthcare benefits to retirees, workers facing retirement started to look for part-time jobs to help defray the cost of health insurance and other medical expenses. Others simply weren't ready to retire.

Take Phyllis Patterson, 56, of Indianapolis, who spent 26 years at [Xerox Corp.](#) When the division she worked for was sold to GE Capital in 2002, she lost her job. Patterson, then 52, had a son in college and was too young to retire.

Last month, Patterson spotted some information about [RetirementJobs.com](#) and decided to check out the site. Patterson said she used it to apply for a position as an online health coach with a firm called MYnetico, a subsidiary of United Health Group Corp. in Minnesota. ``I was told that I would get an offer in November,'' said Patterson. ``The company is in Minnesota, but the job is virtual. So, you can do the work from anywhere.''

Deb Sundal, director of program services at MYnetico, said the company has selected 15 job candidates from [RetirementJobs.com](#). The company is recruiting retired and former teachers to help families fight childhood obesity. The positions, which are part time, pay a starting salary of approximately \$25,000 to coaches with at least 160 clients. Those with 240 clients earn approximately \$38,000 per year. The company, which trains its recruits, adds clients as employees progress.

Sundal receives four or five applications per day from [RetirementJobs.com](#).

``We're looking for people who are tech-savvy,'' she said. ``So, we are now requiring all of our applicants to go through [RetirementJobs.com](#). We see it as an added form of screening.''

MYnetico is among 75 employers that have posted job openings on [RetirementJobs.com](#), which receives about 100,000 hits per month, up from 10,000 in May. Employers pay a fee to access online resumes posted by job-seekers, who can list their qualifications free of charge.

Registered employers include H&R Block , [Home Depot](#) , Borders Books , REI, and the American Red Cross

The site also offers advertising space to firms seeking access to the mature market. Current advertisers include Fidelity Investments and AARP , a national advocacy group for people 50 and older.

``We work with employers much the same way as the online job site, [CareerBuilder.com](#)," said Driver. ``Our fees range from \$100 to \$50,000, depending on the size of the employer and the amount of advertising exposure they are seeking."

[RetirementJobs.com](#) isn't the first to cater to older workers. GrayHair Management LLC , also an online job site, offers employers access to more than 5,500 subscribers. That website encourages employers to e-mail their job descriptions directly to the mailboxes of older executives who are members of the site. The Chicago-based organization helps former executives develop an action plan that will help them find the positions they want.

[Eons.com](#), a site for the older set launched in July by Jeff Taylor, founder of the online job-search site [Monster.com](#), offers news and information about travel, finance, and other issues. It also allows older job-seekers to specify location, skill, and profession. Job listings based on those specifications are forwarded by [Monster.com](#).

Other senior sites include [AARP.org](#) and [TheSenior.com](#).

Driver says [RetirementJobs.com](#) works to ensure that the jobs posted on its site are well-suited for workers over 50. It certifies employers as ``age friendly" before they can post job vacancies by requiring firms to fill out a survey of a dozen questions about their recruiting practices, training, benefits, pay, and corporate culture. The human resource departments of companies whose answers indicate a genuine interest in hiring older workers must participate in another round of interviews, conducted by [RetirementJobs.com](#)'s 12-member staff, to establish that their firms offer benefits and flexible scheduling options that appeal to older workers.

Diane E. Lewis can be reached at dlewis@globe.com. ■

© Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company