Bulletin Board: Retirement delay becomes more common among older employees

by Amy_Winter

The economic downturn has affected the average retirement age. Workers over the age of 60 are choosing to stay in the workplace longer in order to retire with some money in the bank.

Sixty percent of workers over the age of 60 say, according to a CareerBuilder.com survey that questioned 8,000 employees, retirement isn't in the immediate future. These workers intend to remain in the office due to the impact of the recession on their long-term savings.

A decrease in savings may cause 11 percent of older employees to never retire. Seventy-three percent of workers feel it will take up to six years of additional wages to recover lost money.

"Mature workers may be feeling the pinch of this difficult economy more than others because of their impending plans for retirement," says Jason Ferrara, senior career adviser. "Mature workers who are returning to the workplace to offset their retirement losses will likely encounter many of the same challenges that workers of any age are facing today.

"However, their level of knowledge and experience and network of professional contacts will work to their advantage in a competitive job market."

CareerBuilder's job site for older workers, PrimeCB.com, provides suggestions for steering through the current economic downturn:

â€” Speak with your manager. Tell your supervisor that you want to delay your retirement. Try to concentrate on how your strengths and skills can help the company. Bring plans for revenue ideas and suggest helping with new assignments.

â€” Pay attention to market trends. Follow the changes in your job market if you think layoffs are in the near future. Look at the industries that are still thriving in the recession; see if your skills can be used in those other markets.

â€” Build networks. Continue to add to your group of professional and personal contacts. Sign up for a social networking website like Facebook or LinkedIn.

â€” Stand strong and be flexible. Try to use past experiences with recessions to aid your company. And be a place of support and comfort for other co-workers.

For more information, visit www.careerbuilder.com.

ASSISTANT'S JUDGMENT MATTERS

Job-seekers should be on their best behavior for not only the hiring manager, but also for the manager's assistant. Sixty-one percent of executives say â€” according to a survey by OfficeTeam, a staffing service that questioned 150 managers â€” they consider their assistant's opinion significant when it comes to hiring new employees.

Eighteen percent of executives view their associate's opinion as somewhat unimportant, 16 percent say their assistant's views are very insignificant and 1 percent wasn't sure. Four percent of respondents currently don't have an assistant.

"Everyone they encounter, from the person in the elevator to the receptionist, is someone who could potentially weigh in on the hiring decision," says Robert Hosking, executive director.

"Just as treating the waiter rudely at a restaurant creates a bad impression, being discourteous or abrupt with a company's receptionist or office staff can reveal character â€” or lack of it â€” in job applicants."

OfficeTeam provides suggestions to help create an optimistic impression before and after the interview:

â€” Remember phone manners. When calling the hiring manager, be polite and professional to the assistant. Call the "gatekeeper" by name when on the phone or in person at the interview.

â€” Remain focused. Avoid chewing gum or listening to headphones when waiting for the manager. Be polite.

â€” Leave on a friendly note. Say goodbye to the employees you met and thank those that helped you.

For more information, visit www.officeteam.com.

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