



Getting Pros Back to Work

Helping technology experts and retirees find rewarding employment is a labor of love for these two MONEY heroes. —JOAN CAPLIN



DAVE PHILLIPS, 40, CO-CREATOR OF NETWORKING GROUP FOR DETROIT TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS

An Internet systems architect, Phillips was sick of the pitches he endured from sponsors and salespeople at industry networking events. So in 2001 he helped set up Detroitnet.org as a free, low-key forum for information technology workers wanting to talk shop and socialize over a beer. Phillips—who also informally coaches peers seeking employment—threw the group's first Pink Slip Party in 2009 to connect laid-off IT professionals with recruiters; since then, more than 400 people have found jobs through Detroitnet.

“Your network is your lifeline. It is the most important thing you will develop over your career.”



JACK ROSENTHAL, 77, CO-FOUNDER OF GROUP PUTTING PROFESSIONALS AGES 55-PLUS TO WORK

A veteran *New York Times* editor who had covered older Americans' efforts to stay active, Rosenthal joined with social service advocate Herb Sturz in 2005 to launch ReServe, a nonprofit that pays retired professionals a \$10-an-hour stipend to work in schools, government offices, and community agencies. Typical jobs: bookkeeping for small charities and college counseling at underserved high schools. From its first office above a Brooklyn drugstore, ReServe has expanded to five cities, placing 3,000 workers in more than 350 organizations.

“There's a new stage of life between 65 and 85, when most adults are still sharp and want to contribute.”

Three Tips for Job Hunters

With new budgets and projects starting up, January and February are hot hiring months. Jump-start your search with these steps:



BE INDISPENSABLE.

Don't interview hoping people will hire you; make them feel they can't afford not to. Research a company's goals and develop a plan to help meet them. “Think of yourself as a consultant: Come in with a proposal in mind,” says Jean Erickson Walker, author of *The Age Advantage*.



GET ON THE INSIDE

TRACK. Among the 44% of unemployed workers ages 55-plus who have been jobless for over a year? Referrals open doors. At social events, be ready to let people know your goals and skills—without being pushy. Join a networking group for structure. “It's like Weight Watchers for job searchers,” says career coach Mary Eileen Williams.



TWEET TO COMPETE.

A social media presence is a must—a big change over the past year, says Greg Simpson, a career transitions executive at Lee Hecht Harrison. Using Twitter and LinkedIn to stay current is fine, but more activity will heighten your visibility.

—LAUREN GENSLER