



## Job Tips for 50+ Workers

[www.aarp.org/jobtips](http://www.aarp.org/jobtips)

### Assess Yourself Before Job Hunting

If you're a 50+ job seeker, you might be tempted to rush into action, frantically answering job ads or posting your resume online. Don't. Your job search has a better chance of success if you step back and assess yourself first.

#### What's in it for you?

There are many reasons to do a self-assessment. Here are four:

- Understanding what you can do and like to do can help you target jobs and employers.
- Self-assessment alerts you to gaps in skills that need to be addressed.
- Knowing your strengths will help you to answer calmly and confidently in job interviews.
- For career-changers, assessments can point to other fields where you can put your skills to work.

#### What to assess and how

Assessments can be grouped into several broad categories:

- **Skills**—your ability to perform a task or carry out a responsibility. You can either come up with your skills yourself, or check off your skills from a list. Skill assessments let you easily match your skills with jobs that require them. Try the free Skills Profiler on Career InfoNet. <http://www.careeronestop.org/SKILLS/SkillCenterHome.asp>
- **Interests**—topics or fields you are curious about or want to be involved with. Interest inventories measure the fit between particular interests and specific jobs. For a reliable interest assessment, search online for the *Campbell™ Interest and Skill Survey* (fee).
- **Personality**—how you process information, make decisions, and interact with others. For work purposes, one commonly used personality measure is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). The full MBTI must be taken with a certified counselor. [www.myersbriggs.org/](http://www.myersbriggs.org/)
- **Work values and preferences**— what you think is most important or worthwhile in a job. Values assessments help you decide the type of work environment you prefer.

## Explore assessment tools

Jot down notes about yourself. Think about what you have to give the world. Ask friends, co-workers and family for their feedback. Then pick the tools that make the most sense to you.

- **Career books and websites** for the mature job seeker are likely to include lists of skills and descriptions of jobs to see how your skills fit. The “Over-40 Job Search Guide” by Gail Geary has a helpful chapter on how to transfer your skills to a new job or field. Quintessential Careers has reviews of more than 30 online assessment tools at [www.quintcareers.com/career\\_assessment.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/career_assessment.html).
- **Online career assessments** let you match your skills with different occupations. Some tests are free; others charge a fee for more personalized service. For links to a variety of online assessment tools, search *The Riley Guide* and the *Job Hunter's Bible*. John Holland's *Self-Directed Search*, both available for a fee.
- **Career professionals** may administer and interpret skills assessment tests. Most who work in this field call themselves either career counselors or career coaches. See the AARP tip sheet on Deciding If You Need a Career Coach or Counselor.
- **AARP Foundation WorkSearch** offers interest, ability and skill assessments through the offices of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). For locations, see [www.aarpworksearch.org](http://www.aarpworksearch.org).

## Last word: know what you're getting

Before taking any assessment, know if there is a fee, how much it is, and what it covers. Do you get an automated report? Information on how to interpret the results? A session with a counselor? Be clear on this up front.



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