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ROBERT POWELL

Job encore

Where and how to find work that matters in the second half of life

By [Robert Powell](#), MarketWatch

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BOSTON (MarketWatch) -- Many Americans long to work in the job of their dreams after they retire from their first career. But what do these "encore" jobs look like and how does one find one?

Those are the questions that millions upon millions of preretirees must answer if they ever hope to find work that matters in the second half of their life. Or at least so says Marc Freedman in his new book "Encore."



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According to Freedman, the founder of Civic Ventures, all is not yet rosy for those who want to keep working after they retire. Age discrimination still exists, there are not enough flexible jobs in the nonprofit or public sectors, and continuing education and retraining is neither commonplace nor affordable.

That said, the best way to find an "encore" job is to ask some basic questions. Those include:

- How would you like to spend the next five or 10 or 20 years?
- What community or national or global problems motivate you to act?
- How much income do you need to earn?
- Do you want to stay in the same field or explore something new?
- Do you want to start your own organization or work for an existing one?
- Are you willing and able to go back to school or get other training?

Freedman says preretirees must consider whether they want to be a career recycler, career changer or career maker. In addition, he says preretirees should think long and hard about their own motivations and what makes them happy.

Resources to do that include such books as "The Purpose-Driven Life" by Rick Warren, "What Color is Your Parachute For Retirement" by John Nelson and "Don't Retire, Rewire" by Jeri Sedlar and Rick Miners. The latter book can help you explore the reasons for working, beyond salary.

Merrill Lynch has an abbreviated version of Sedlar's and Miners' reasons-for-working checklist on its Web site. Visit the [site](#).

And then there's the more expensive version of discovering yourself called My Next Phase. That site offers a range of services, including an online assessment, telecourses and private coaching. Costs for services range from \$39.95 to \$395. Visit the [site](#).

According to Freedman, older Americans have to sell their "experience" as an asset when seeking an encore career.

"Stress your reliability, good judgment, problem-solving ability, ability to navigate a crisis, experience in negotiating compromise, ability to listen, ability to assess cost-benefit trade-offs, comfort level working with all types of personalities, sense of responsibility, established identity, and sense of purpose," is just some of the advice Freedman has to offer older Americans on selling their experience.

For those who have trepidations about landing an encore job only to have it be the wrong one, Freedman suggests the following: "Try a few things before leaping into a commitment." He suggests finding an internship, working part-time as a temp, or volunteering into a paid position.

For those who plan work for the greater good, instead of the greater salary, Freedman suggests taking a gander at the salaries being offered in the nonprofit world. Resources include: The NonProfit Times Annual Salary Survey, Compensation in Nonprofit Organizations and the Guidestar Compensation Report.

Look to growth industries

Still having trouble figuring out where to find an encore career? Consider where some of the top job growth is, such as health care, education, the aging field, the federal government and the nonprofit sector.

For instance, the American Hospital Association is actively encouraging hospitals to recruit midlife career changers, according to Freedman. And you don't have to be a doctor or a nurse to work in health care, he says. In fact, there are more than 100 areas of specialization all generally known as "allied health professions." Learn more about opportunities in health-care industry in the American Medical Association's Health Professions Career and Education Directory and at the Health Care Workforce Web site. Visit that [site](#).

The nation is also in need of educators, says Freedman. The demand is most acute in cities, but everywhere there is a need for teachers in math, science and special education. Given the commitment required, he suggests signing up with a local school district as a substitute teacher before diving headlong into teaching as a career.

Other opportunities include day-care teachers, after-school program staff, tutors and adjunct professors at local community colleges. Experience Corps is one resource for those who want to mentor or tutor elementary school

students. Visit the [site](#).

Another place to find an encore career is in the aging field, where Freedman expects there will be an increase in the number of organizations dedicated to helping people age well. Storytellers, oral historians to record the memories of older folks, yoga teachers, dance instructors and computer-skill teachers are just some of the jobs that will be or are available. Learn more at Exploring Careers in Aging. Visit that [site](#).

And of course there's always Uncle Sam, which with nearly 3 million employees is the nation's largest employer. According to Freedman, there are civil-service jobs available in every state, many of which have good benefits, flexible scheduling and opportunities for advancement. Two resources include USAJOBS ([Web site](#)) and Federal Jobs Net ([Web site](#)).

For those interested in the nonprofit sector, Freedman says there are literally millions of choices. There are, he says, 1.8 million nonprofit organizations. For those searching for a nonprofit job, resources include Bridgestar, Charitychannel.com, Common Good Careers, and the Community Career Center.

And Freedman says some will find encore careers as social entrepreneurs. According to the Skoll Foundation, social entrepreneurs are those motivated by altruism and a desire to promote the growth of equitable civil services. Social entrepreneurs pioneer innovative, effective, sustainable approaches to meet the needs of the marginalized, the disadvantaged and the disenfranchised. Learn more at the [Skoll Foundation](#) and the [Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship](#). ■

Robert Powell has been a journalist covering personal finance issues for more than 20 years, writing and editing for publications such as The Wall Street Journal, the Financial Times, and Mutual Fund Market News.

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