

New Beginnings

For many experienced workers, retirement will no longer signal the end of working, but more so a career and lifestyle transition. That transition represents multiple options – continuing to work (perhaps at a different pace), learning a new trade, changing careers, starting a business, going back to school, becoming more involved in volunteer work. Retirement can be a new beginning – a mix of working, learning, relaxing, and trying new things.

Dr. Ken Dychtwald, author of *Age Power*, describes the transition between working and retiring as *Middlescence*, which he says occurs to people sometime in their 50's to 70's. *Middlescence* can be a time of confusion and frustration for many workers, especially for those whose identity is tied directly to their jobs. But it is also a time of growth and reinvention.

Positive Transitions

Change can be stressful and even if you see this stage of your life as a new beginning, it can still be a time of difficult transitions. Look at change as an energizer instead of just stressful and disruptive. This can be an incredible opportunity to do what you have always wanted to do.

Tips for Transitions

- **Maintain your network.** Keep in touch with people who have helped you or could help you in the future. Constantly add to your network by making new contacts through professional associations, volunteer work, and personal activities.
- **Welcome change.** Change can be invigorating. Think of challenges as opportunities and mistakes as learning experiences.
- **Create change for yourself.** Take control of your life and proactively make changes in your situation. The change can be small or big – from a change in routine to a total career change.

- **Focus on your vision.** Think about what you really want. What are you meant to accomplish in life? How and where do you want to be living in five or ten years?
- **Develop a personal portfolio.** Include your attitudes, work values, knowledge, experience, skills, network and resources. Look at what you've accomplished in life. What knowledge or skills, especially transferable skills, do you have?
- **Think of yourself as a business.** View every work situation as a market place. It's your responsibility to fill the needs of that market place. How can you apply your knowledge, skills and initiative to make a difference?
- **Learn to be self-reliant.** Your own unique abilities and talents are your most important resource. Learn to count on yourself and take charge of your future.

Adapted from *Transitions. Keeping fit for transitions.* www.careerccc.org

Myth: Older workers are more expensive.

Reality: While workers with tenure are entitled to more vacation time and pension costs related to number of years worked, replacing workers is not cost free. Aetna Insurance Company did a study of this issue and discovered these factors added 93% to the first year's salary of new employees. Keeping an older, experienced worker on the job as long as possible saves the extensive costs related to advertising, interviewing, hiring and training a new worker.