External Resources for Exploring Encore Careers

This list of 100+ great resources is for boomers (and others) interested in fun, flexible and fulfilling second-act careers. If you are 50+ and considering opportunities to profit from your passions on a part-time basis, this is the list for you. This list is by no means complete, but should help to get you started.

A Good Place to Start

**AARP Life Reimagined:** AARP has built an outstanding career reinvention portal for people over 50 and it’s getting better all the time. A must-visit.

**NextAvenue.org** (PBS site for people over 50): New content every day – newsletter available.

Get Inspired

There’s nothing like a good success story to rev-up your career reinvention success. Here are several sites with stories sure to inspire:

**Huffpost50.com:** Their reinvention page is filled with articles on all aspects of midlife reinvention.

**JonathanFields.com:** I love everything Jonathan Fields does, especially his Good Life Project (GLP), a video series featuring in-depth conversations with acclaimed artists, entrepreneurs and influencers. His book, *Career Renegade: How to Make a Great Living Doing What You Love*, is a very worthwhile read.

**Liveyourlegend.net:** The look and tone of this site is skewed to a younger demographic, but regardless, I’m confident you’ll benefit from the advice, resources and inspirational profiles shared here by Scott Dinsmore, whose mission is to “change the world by doing work you love.”

**More.com:** This women’s magazine has an extensive collection of second-act and reinvention stories (helpful for men as well).

**TED.com:** TED talk videos feature thousands of the world’s most inspirational speakers on a wide range of topics, and include many thought-provoking second-act stories.
Explore Entrepreneurial Possibilities

These sites will help you to explore a variety of intriguing entrepreneurial pursuits and possibilities.

**Entrepreneur.com**: The online home of Entrepreneur magazine offers entrepreneurial advice, as well as plentiful information and resources for people interested in franchising.

**FabJob.com**: FabJob guides are the best resource that I know of for learning in-depth “how-to” information about an amazing variety of entrepreneurial careers – everything from *How to Become a Cake Decorator* to *How to Become a Celebrity Assistant* to *How to Become a Mystery Writer*.

Find Entrepreneurial Training and Assistance

Starting a new business can be a daunting task: What zoning regulations apply to your situation? What’s the best legal format for your business? How can you best market your services on a shoestring budget? These resources will help you to launch, manage and grow your venture.

**SCORE**: A nonprofit with more than 340 chapters nationwide, SCORE is dedicated to helping people start and grow small businesses – webinars, in-person training programs, and free consultations with experienced professionals who serve as mentors to budding entrepreneurs.

The [U.S. Small Business Administration](https://www.sba.gov) and their roughly 1,000 [Small Business Development Centers](https://sba.gov/local/offices) around the country are excellent resources for anyone wanting to start, grow or manage a business. Be sure to check out their suite of resources intended specifically for the [50+ Entrepreneur](https://www.sba.gov/50plus).

The Kaufmann Foundation runs an excellent [FastTrac program](https://www.kaufmannfoundation.org/fasttrac) for both new and experienced entrepreneurs (in-person and online).

**Lawrence N. Field Center for Entrepreneurship at the Zicklin School of Business at Baruch College**: A free online resource center and curriculum designed for senior entrepreneurs.

**Bizstarters.com**: Coaching, services and information for boomer entrepreneurs.

**PivotPlanet.com**: Whether you’re thinking of becoming a baker, beekeeper or kids clothing designer (or pretty much anything else), PivotPlanet.com is the best place to find advisors and mentors who can answer your questions about all types of entrepreneurial options.

**Plus 50 Community College Listings**: The Plus 50 Initiative invests in community colleges that offer training and support services for the plus 50 student population.

**Start-Up Nation**: As you might gather from the name, lots of resources here to help start a business.
Looking for Financing?

The SBA’s Small Business Investment Company program can offer leads.

BusinessUSA is the federal government’s site for entrepreneurs seeking small-business loans.

Online Courses:

(MIT Alumni also have access to courses at MIT via: MIT Professional Education Program and online with Online X and Open Courseware)

Gothamwriters.com: Gotham Writers’ Workshop is the leading creative writing school in New York City and they now offer a number of their courses online. If you’re interested in learning about the craft and business of writing, this is the site for you.

Lynda.com: For $25/month (or less for annual membership) members receive unlimited access to a vast library of video tutorials covering topics like CAD, 3-D animation, social media marketing, photography, film making, app development, web graphics and more.

SkilledUp.com: Whether you want to learn how to build your practice, use social media or create a podcast, Skilledup.com’s database makes it easy to find thousands of courses all in one place.

CreativeLIVE: Classes for creative entrepreneurs with titles like Unlock the Power of Pinterest, Make Your Website Work for You, Starting a Business over 40 and Social Media Bootcamp. The initial live broadcast of the class is free and then the recorded class can be accessed for a small fee.

International Freelancers Academy: Training classes and resources for freelancers.

Look for Flexible Gigs and P/T Jobs

Interested in finding freelance, work-from-home and flexible jobs online? Here are some of my favorites. Cautionary note: These sites are generally very reliable, but whenever responding to online ads, please remember the adage, “If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.”

Behance.com: An online marketplace where creatives (photographers, graphic designers, illustrators, etc.) can showcase their works and search for jobs and freelance opportunities.

BackDoorJobs.com: Short-term jobs (teach abroad, farm jobs, wilderness therapy ventures, etc.) in the US and overseas.

CoolWorks.com: Seasonal and summer job listings at places like resorts, ski attractions and the national parks.
Direct Sales Association: If you’re interested in working for a home party or direct sales company (such as Pampered Chef), this is a great place to begin your research.

eLance.com: Hundreds of thousands of projects are listed here including web development, graphic design, programming, marketing, writing, administrative, research and more.

FlexJobs.com: Jobs and advice for people who want to work on a flexible basis. Small fee to access the job listings, but well worth the investment. Many helpful articles about flexible work.

Freelance Writing Jobs: A freelance writing community featuring daily job leads, articles and “plenty of commiseration.”

Guru.com: Opportunities for freelancers in over 160 professional categories including website design, programming, graphic design, business consulting, and administrative support.

MediaBistro.com: Excellent site for anyone who creates or works with content, or who is a non-creative professional working in a creative industry. Job board has both full-time and freelance gigs and they have a wonderful training section covering all types of media and content-related careers.

Ratracebellion.com: Work-from-home jobs and opportunities. Excellent free newsletter.

TempAndPartTimeJobs.com: This site has a search engine where boomers and older workers can search for temporary, part-time, seasonal jobs and project assignments. You can also post your resume and set a job alert to be notified when a position is posted that matches your experience.

Explore Temp and Contract Firms

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of firms who place professionals into temporary, executive-on-demand and contract assignments. Here is a sampling:

Aquent: Project opportunities for professionals in the digital, creative and marketing fields.

Arise Virtual Solutions: Work-from-home jobs in customer service, sales and technology support to major Fortune 500 companies. According to a recent Wall Street Journal article, “The company’s goal is to have older Americans make up 35% of its network of 25,000 contractors, up from a current 20%.”

Patina Solutions: Opportunities for professionals with 25+ years of experience who want to work in project-based roles. Assignments cover a wide assortment of industries and business functions.

Tatum: Interim executive firm that contracts out CEOs, CFOs, CIOs and other finance and accounting executives.
Get Help with the Boomer Job Search

Looking for a job when you’re over 50 can be challenging – these sites can help:

**CareerPivot.com**: Career and job search advice for boomers.

**Experience2Work**: Employment boot camp for boomers in the NY tri-state region.

**Job-Hunt.org**: One of the best overall job search sites on the web, with special sections devoted to mid-life job search and lifestyle-friendly careers.

**Mary Eileen Williams**: The author of *Land the Job You Love: 10 Surefire Strategies for Jobseekers Over 50* writes a very useful column on HuffPost50 and has other job search advice on her site, Feisty Side of 50.

**Over 50 and Unemployed**: Outstanding 5-part series from AARP that examines a variety of work options including part-time work, consulting, entrepreneurship and project work.

**RetirementJobs.com**: Job site for people over 50.

Read a Second-Act Career Book:

**Great Jobs for Everyone 50+: Finding Work That Keeps You Happy and Healthy ... And Pays the Bills** by Kerry Hannon

**Life Reimagined: Discovering Your New Life Possibilities** by Richard J. Leider

**Making a Living Without a Job: Winning Ways for Creating Work That You Love** by Barbara Winter

**Second-Act Careers: 50+ Ways to Profit From Your Passions During Semi-Retirement** by Nancy Collamer

**The $100 Startup: Reinvent the Way You Make a Living, Do What You Love, and Create a New Future** by Chris Guillebeau

**The Economy of You: Discover Your Inner Entrepreneur and Recession-Proof Your Life**: by Kimberly Palmer

**The Encore Career Handbook: How to Make a Living and a Difference in the Second Half of Life** by Marci Alboher

**Your Life Calling: Reimagining the Rest of Your Life** by Jane Pauley
Build a Profitable Blog

These resources are for people interested in learning how to create profitable blogs and other types of online businesses that can be run from anywhere in the world.

Alexis Grant: Alexis has excellent resources, guide books and courses for people interested in profiting from the digital economy. Her advice is always spot-on.


BlogWorld and New Media Expos: These conferences offer a fabulous way to learn about how to succeed in the new media environment. Another great source for blogging conferences is BlogHer.com

Location180.com: Sean Ogle writes about building a business you can run from anywhere.

Problogger.net: Outstanding resource (probably my favorite site about blogging). Also lists freelance blogging opportunities.

The Sparkline (formerly ThinkTraffic.com): My other favorite site about blogging. Run by Corbett Barr, Chase Reeves and Caleb Wojcik, these guys are the “real deal.”

The Suitcase Entrepreneur: The founder of the site, Natalie Sisson, runs her business while traveling the world. Her book, The Suitcase Entrepreneur, is chock-full of helpful advice and resources.

TropicalMBA.com: Another site that helps people build profitable location independent businesses.

Find a 50+ Community

It can be tough to make a go of a second-act without the support of other people going through the same transition at the same time. While the following sites aren’t technically career sites, their content is tailored to people over 50 (most of these are geared for women, sorry guys!):

Better After 50: A weekly online magazine and community for women over 50. Here is a link to an article I wrote about them on Nextavenue.

Sixty and Me: An online community and website of 40,000+ women over sixty. Amazing collection of insightful content.

The Transition Network: The Transition Network has chapters throughout the US. It is an inclusive community of professional women, 50+, whose changing life situations lead them to seek new connections, resources and opportunities.
Great Sites for People Who Love...

Arts and Crafts

**The Craft and Hobby Association:** An international association that hosts two industry expos, ongoing training programs and offers a full-suite of purchasable benefits (health, life, long-term care etc.).

**Craftsy.com:** If you love to make crafts, or you want to figure out a craft you can make and sell, you’ll like these online crafting classes and videos.

**Etsy:** The world’s largest online marketplace for crafters, Etsy also has an impressive educational and community component to their site.

**Festival Network Online:** With over 22,000 event listings, this is a terrific resource for people who want to sell their crafts at art shows and fairs (or perform at music festivals).

**How Artists Make Money:** An inspirational series from the wonderful folks at NPR that profiles successful artists, including poets, painters and musicians.

Food Lovers

**Credibles:** A new crowd-funding platform for small and sustainable food-related businesses. Emerging food ventures can “pre-sell” new products to food enthusiasts and small investors.

**GoodFoodJobs.com:** This tasty site lists full-time and flexible jobs, as well as internship opportunities, in a variety of food-related fields. Be sure to also check out the many entertaining second-act profiles on the site.

**New England Food Safety Consortium:** Helpful listing of food-related business sites (you don’t need to live in New England to take advantage of them).

**SpecialtyFood.com:** The Specialty Food Association caters to food artisans, importers and entrepreneurs.

Non-Profits and Volunteering

**Encore.org:** Fabulous resource for people over 50 interested in helping the greater good. Among their many offerings, Encore sponsors a fellowship program that matches skilled professionals with at least 15 years of experience with “high impact” assignments at nonprofits.

**Bridgespan Group:** An excellent resource for executives looking to “cross the bridge” into the non-profit arena.
**Commongood Careers:** Retained search firm serving the nonprofit industry. Fee may apply.

**Executive Service Corps:** Nationwide network of nonprofit consulting organizations. Volunteers assist organizations with strategic planning, improving board effectiveness, coaching CEO's, marketing and business planning.

**Foundation Center:** The Foundation Center operates research, education, and training programs designed to advance knowledge of philanthropy at every level.

**Idealist.org** has a database of over 80,000 nonprofit organizations and a nonprofit jobs board.

**LinkedIn Volunteer Marketplace:** New offering that lists volunteer opportunities and board openings throughout the world.

**ReServe.org:** ReServe connects retirees with part-time work at nonprofits. Best for those who want to help organizations strapped for funds and resources, since the pay offered is quite low (about $10 an hour).

**Pets**

**American Kennel Club** has certification and training for people interested in becoming breeders and dog show judges.

**American Pet Products Association** is a must-visit site for anyone interested in learning more about producing, selling or marketing pet products.

**Association of Pet Dog Trainers** and the **Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers** sell resources for people interested in becoming a dog trainer.

**FabJob guides** sells several titles in the pet care space:

- How to Start Your Own Pet Business
- Open a Doggie Daycare Business
- Start a Dog Walking Business
- Become a Pet Groomer
- Become a Pet Hotel Owner
- Become a Pet Sitter

**Pet franchise options:** There are an ever increasing number of pet franchises, ranging from grooming franchises to doggie daycare services to pet waste removal services.
Publishing and Writing

**Writers Digest:** Widely regarded as the #1 resource for writers, this is a one-stop-shop for information about conferences, writer’s communities and advice on how to monetize your writing.

**The Well-Fed Writer:** Advice, resources and training for people interested in writing for the business and corporate markets.

**The Write Life:** A new and very helpful site for writers eager to learn how to thrive in the digital world.

**How to Become a Novelist in Your Second Career:** This is an article I wrote for NextAvenue.org that shares tips and resources for aspiring novelists.

**Make a Living Writing:** As the name implies, this site will help you learn how to profit from your writing skills.

**Memoir Writing:** The website of the Association of Personal Historians where people learn how to craft personal histories – and how to develop an income stream from doing them.

**Rachelle Gardner:** Great advice for anyone looking to learn more about the publishing industry – topics include how to write a winning book proposal, how to get a book cover designed and how to land a literary agent.

Travel

**Caretaking Gazette:** Lists property caretaking opportunities around the globe.

**Modern-Day Nomads:** Site for those who want to work while traveling the world.

**Peace Corps 50:** Hard is it may be to believe, 5% of Peace Corps volunteers are over age 50. Learn more about their offerings for people over 50 here.

**Transitions Abroad:** Articles and resources for people interested in working abroad and teaching English overseas.

**Travel Writing 2.0:** Advice and resources if you want to earn a living as a travel writer.

*Please Note:
These resources are provided as a self-start guide for individual exploration and information only, and not intended to endorse any one individual or product.*