

# What federal employees should know about late-career transitions and encore entrepreneurship



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The Partnership for Public Service recently hosted a **FedSupport webinar** < <https://fedsupport.org/webinars-events/> > focused on helping federal employees explore late-career transitions and encore entrepreneurship.

The webinar featured Elisse Wright Barnes, **a LinkedIn trainer and career educator** < <https://www.drelissebarnesjdphd.com/> > for jobseekers age 50+, and Jay Aronowitz, **a former senior executive** < <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jay-aronowitz-ses-retired-7203bb7/> > and founder of a human capital consulting business.

The discussion, moderated by Katy Hogan, director of workforce programs at the Partnership, was designed to support attendees considering post-government employment, entrepreneurship or volunteer work.

## Planning for what's next

Career transitions offer a valuable opportunity to reassess goals and design a work life that reflects current priorities. **Federal employees exploring new directions** < <https://the-partnership-archive.org/blog/career-trends-and-transitions-for-federal-employees-fedsupport-webinar-explainer-series/> > were

encouraged to consider how their professional skills align with their personal values, whether that means pursuing flexible work or launching a business.

Knowing how to clearly communicate one's skills and value proposition is key, especially when **shifting into a new sector** < <https://the-partnership-archive.org/blog/public-to-private-sector-translate-skills-job-search-tips-federal-employees-explainer-series-fedsupport-webinar/>>. Reflecting on accomplishments, identifying transferable expertise and setting intentional goals can help shape a path forward.

## Exploring entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship offers an alternative to traditional employment and can be particularly appealing for those seeking flexibility, purpose, or creative independence. Many start by identifying unmet needs in their communities or offering services aligned with their expertise.

Federal employees are encouraged to begin with research and take advantage of free or low-cost resources available through:

- Local chambers of commerce
- **Small Business Development Centers** < <https://www.sba.gov/local-assistance/resource-partners/small-business-development-centers-sbdc>>
- **SCORE business mentoring** < <https://www.sba.gov/local-assistance/resource-partners/score-business-mentoring>>
- Public libraries and workforce development agencies
- Community colleges and adult education programs

Testing ideas through volunteering, networking or small-scale project work can provide a low-risk way to build confidence and refine a business model.

## Translating federal experience to new roles

Jobseekers looking to move into the private or nonprofit sectors should focus on communicating **how their federal experience can add value in new environments** < <https://the-partnership-archive.org/blog/executive->

**recruiters-best-practices-for-federal-employees-mid-career-transitions-public-to-private-fedsupport-explainer-series-webinar/>**. Leadership, cross-agency collaboration, stakeholder engagement and policy implementation are all highly transferable.

Rather than listing years of experience, applicants should highlight measurable results and specific outcomes. Quantifying impact, such as budget size, program scope or stakeholder reach, helps employers see the value of past work in concrete terms.

## Addressing age-related bias

Ageism remains a concern for many job seekers, but confidence, relevance and authenticity can create a strong and lasting impression. Employers today are looking for candidates who not only have solid expertise but also show the **ability to adapt to changing environments and challenges** < **<https://the-partnership-archive.org/blog/opportunities-to-lead-change-amid-turmoil-and-uncertainty-in-the-public-sector/>**>.

Job seekers should focus on aspects within their control. This means cultivating a mindset geared toward continuous learning and growth. It also involves becoming comfortable with new technologies and being able to clearly express their professional strengths.

Taking the time to update resumes and online profiles with language that reflects current industry trends along with recent accomplishments helps to build and maintain credibility. By doing so, candidates can demonstrate both their competence and their readiness to contribute meaningfully in today's workforce.

## Moving forward

Whether pursuing entrepreneurship, part-time consulting or a full-time role in a new sector, late-career transitions can be a rewarding next step for public servants. With the right planning, resources and support, federal employees can continue making meaningful contributions well beyond government service.

To watch this webinar and explore additional resources, visit our **FedSupport Hub** < **<https://fedsupport.org/>**>.

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## watch – fedsupport webinar

**Title:** FedSupport Webinar: Encore Entrepreneurship and Late Career Transitions

**Date:** May 21, 2025

**Speakers:** Dr. Elisse Barnes, JD, PhD, founder, Of a Certain Vintage Workforce Education. Jay Aronowitz, president and CEO, JDA group and former civilian US Army chief human capital officer. Katy Hogan (moderator), director of workforce programs, Partnership for Public Service

**Topics:** Resources for federal employees, career transitions, encore entrepreneurship, jobseekers 50+

- **Workforce < [https://ourpublicservice.org/know-the-facts/blog?category=598#news\\_feed](https://ourpublicservice.org/know-the-facts/blog?category=598#news_feed)>**