

## Post-retirement job doesn't have to feel like work, expert tells Dominion retirees

By Chet Wade

Kerry Hannon doesn't think life in "retirement" should be all that retiring for most folks. She told more than 100 Dominion Energy retirees recently they should be looking at other "re" words to stay happy and healthy. Reinvigoration, reinvention, re-engagement and – maybe – re-employment.

"I see (retirement) as a very energizing period," Hannon said at a meeting of the Dominion Energy Metro Richmond Retiree Association. Because of today's longer lifespans, "It is a period that is different than we have ever seen before. You can be in retirement far longer than you ever worked, so the possibilities this offers is amazing."

Hannon is far from being retired. She is a nationally recognized expert and strategist on career transitions, entrepreneurship, personal finance and retirement. She is the author of a dozen books, including, "Great Jobs for Everyone 50+," "Never Too Old To Get Rich," "Getting The Job You Want After 50" and "What's Next? Finding Your Passion and Your Dream Job in Your Forties, Fifties and Beyond." She has appeared on "Dr. Phil," ABC, CBS, NBC, NPR and PBS. Her writing has been published in *The New York Times*, *Forbes*, *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* and *USA Today*.

Hannon said the Baby Boomer generation is redefining – another "re" word" – what retirement is.

"The Boomer generation, this is a generation of people that was 'Can do.'," she said. "This is a generation that was about changing things."

For a number of reasons, more retirees are continuing to work for pay once they leave their primary employer. For some it is a financial necessity. For many, it is a way to stay engaged and vital.

"I'm a big fan of working" after retirement," Hannon said. "If it's for pay, even for people who have saved adequately, it is a safety net. It provides an ability to delay dipping into retirement accounts so early. You also maybe can delay taking Social Security."

About a third of Americans ages 65 to 74 will be working at least part time by 2022, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. That is up from one fifth in 2002. By 2022, one of every 10 people age 75 and up is expected to be working at least some hours.

A show of hands at the Dominion retiree meeting backed up the government forecast. About a third said they were working at least part time or volunteering in a way that is like a job.

Hannon is quick to admit that working again after retirement is not for everyone.

"Do a soul-searching," she said. "We need to sit down and say, 'What do I value? What are my values? What are my skills? Where do I want to make a difference in the world?' And, decide if it is leisure. Volunteering? Does it become family as part of leisure and a little bit of work?"

But she also noted that retirement can provide an emotional challenge for some. The work environment provides social interaction, a sense of purpose and a diversion from some of life's problems.

"I meet so many people who when they go into retirement they go into a depression," she said. "They lose their sense of identity, who they were, their social network. For them the important thing is staying engaged in a schedule. A work-environment kind of way is good for your health. It keeps you in social interaction."

Where to start if you want to work again?

Hannon said finding something you are passionate about helps. It makes a job feel less like work. Many people have skills that can be repurposed from their old jobs. For others it means going back to school to sharpen skills or get new ones.

Some people start their own businesses. Older entrepreneurs have many advantages, including experience, patience, understanding how to overcome adversity, a passion for their new venture and the ability to accept risk.

For those looking to get a job, Hannon suggests networking. Don't be shy. You will find that people want to help.

"Reach out to alumni groups like (the retirees' association), college alumni associations, neighbors and friends," Hannon said. "Start by saying, 'I am looking for something' and things will come back to you."

Another option is to volunteer at a non-profit. It may lead to a paid position there or help you make networking contacts for other jobs. And, it keeps your resume fresh.

In the end, Hannon said, it should not be all about work. She encourages a holistic approach to retirement. If you do work, the job should not be an end but an end to a means.

"These are not years that are a blank slate," she said. "These are years that may start out that way, but it provides a rich smorgasbord."

More information is available at Hannon's website, [KerryHannon.com](http://KerryHannon.com). Along with articles and other information from Hannon, there is a section called "[Great Resources for Career Moves](#)."

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