

# Bridge jobs

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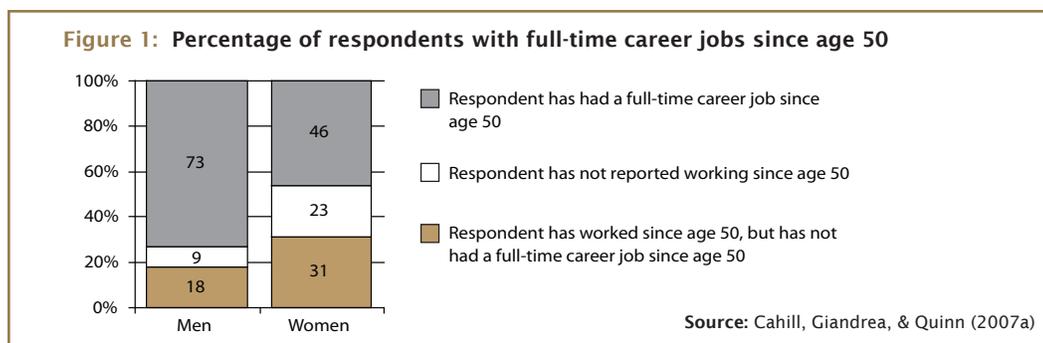
## BRIDGE JOBS

**Project Team:** Katherine Kane, with Jason Dobbs, Patrick Healey, Daniel Mak, & Tay K. McNamara

A bridge job refers to as employment following a full-time career, typically part-time or of short duration.

### Question 1: How common are bridge jobs?

- “The majority of older Americans leaving full-time career employment (about 60% of those leaving a full-time career job after age 50 and about 53% of those leaving after age 55) moved first to a bridge job rather than directly out of the labor force.” (Cahill, Giandrea, & Quinn, 2006: 523).
- Using Health and Retirement (HRS) data from 1992 to 2004, Cahill, Giandrea, and Quinn found that 18 percent of men and 31 percent of women had worked since age 50, but not on a full-time career job. (Cahill, Giandrea, & Quinn, 2007a: 3).



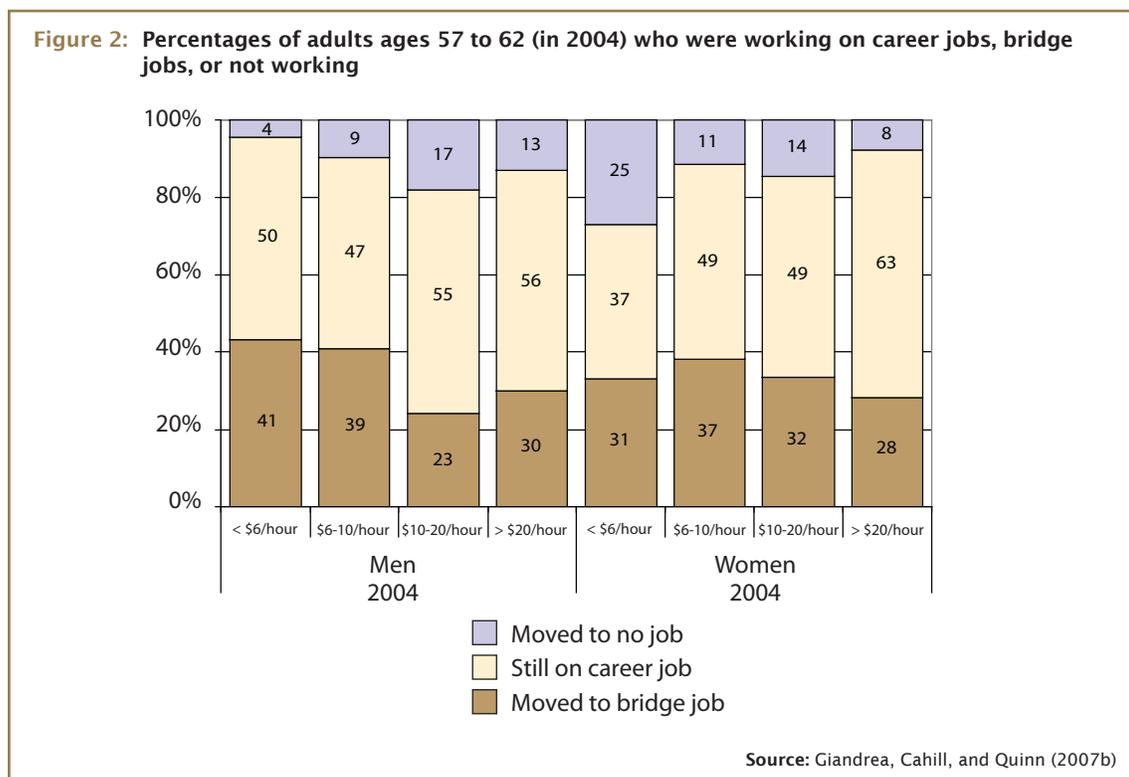
### Question 2: Do older workers want to work bridge jobs?

- Using Health and Retirement data, Cahill, Giandrea, and Quinn found that “When asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement, “I enjoy going to work,” 95 percent of respondents on bridge jobs in 2004 said they strongly agreed... responses were similar across wage or occupation groups. About 33 percent of white collar, highly skilled workers said they “strongly agreed” with the statement, as did 33 percent of blue collar, non-highly skilled workers.” (Cahill, Giandrea, & Quinn, 2007a: 7).
- Using Data from the Health and Retirement study, Maestas (2007) found that 55 percent of older workers (born between 1931 and 1941) had accurate expectations about post-retirement work, compared to 37 percent who expected to work but did not and 8 percent who did not expect to work but did. (Maestas, 2007: Table 3).

### Question 3: What kind of workers take bridge jobs?

- Using Health and Retirement (HRS) data from 1992 to 2004, “Younger HRS respondents who left their career jobs by 2004 were more likely to move to a bridge job. For example, of the men who moved from a full-time career (FTC) job by 2004, 67 percent of those less than age 62 years had taken a bridge job, compared to only half of those aged 65 years and older. A similar pattern was found among women with career jobs, with the differences between the youngest and oldest workers being even more pronounced.” (Cahill, Giandrea, & Quinn, 2007a: 4).

- Using Health and Retirement (HRS) data from 1992 to 2004, “Men [58%] and women [62%] who rated their health as excellent or very good were more likely than those who rated their health as fair or poor [Men: 44%, Women: 43%] to take on bridge jobs.” (Cahill, Giandrea, & Quinn, 2007a: 4-5).
- Focusing on the War Baby cohort (born 1942-1947), Giandrea, Cahill, and Quinn (2007) found that 23 percent of men with medium-high wage rates (\$10-\$20 per hour in 1998) in 1998 were working bridge jobs in 2004, compared to 41 percent of men earning low wages (less than \$6 per hour), 39 percent of men earning medium-low wages (\$6-\$10 per hour), and 30 percent of men earning high wages (\$20 or more per hour). (Giandrea, Cahill, & Quinn, 2007b: Table 8).
- Focusing on the War Baby cohort (1942-1947), Giandrea, Cahill, and Quinn (2007) found that 37 percent of women with medium-low wage rates (\$6-\$10 per hour in 1998) in 1998 were working bridge jobs in 2004, compared to 31 percent women earning low wages (less than \$6 per hour), 32 percent of women earning medium-high wages (\$10-\$20 per hour), and 28 percent of women earning high wages (\$20 or more per hour). (Giandrea, Cahill, & Quinn, 2007b: Table 8).



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