

When is the right time to bid adieu to your job?

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One dare not utter the word, till the moment actually arrives. And when the time comes, while some smile and look at it as a long coffee break, others get the feeling that time is running out on them. Well we are talking about the much dreaded word, retirement. Recently on the one hand, we watched Anil Kumble, fondly called Jumbo, make a graceful exit from Indian cricket, on the other hand we also witnessed discontent amongst Panjab University teachers after the retirement of 58 faculty members following Panjab and Haryana High Court's dismissal of their petition to increase retirement age from 60 to 62 years. But amidst all this, what one was left wondering was what's the right time to retire and how to go about it.

Recalls Indian Olympian Milkha Singh, "It was in 1964 after having participated in in three Olympics, that I decided to retire. I had given world-standard performances but understood the limitations of my body. However, I stayed on for two more years as the country wanted me to." He feels a time does come when one should make way for young blood. "It's better to quit with a good record than perform badly and be asked to leave," he makes a point

Agrees model Manpreet Brar, "As long as one does justice to the job, it's fine to continue." So, is consistency in performance the criterion for her? "Not entirely, it's a personal decision too. At a certain juncture in life, one feels the need to move on," says Manpreet, who bid goodbye to the ramp when her contemporaries were still modelling.

However AC Jhulka, a teacher at the Department of Economics, Panjab University, who retired a couple of days ago, feels it is not about personal choices. "When you join a particular service, it comes with certain rules, which also lay down the age of retirement," he says, while adding, "I'm enjoying my well-deserved break."

Says psychologist Rajshree Sarda, "When one is in a profession that does not set a retirement age, then one should go by the level of one's fitness and alertness. Retiring is all about moving on with dignity." But, how does one wake up to the fact that there is going to be no office from tomorrow? "By seeking re-employment opportunities, if one

wants to continue to work," says Sarda. And, ensuring that there is no dearth of such opportunities is entrepreneur Amrit Pal Singh, creator of a website that serves as a platform for retired Sikhs to help them find work.

And what got him thinking were these figures. "A total of 77 million people in India as per the 2001 census are aged above 60 years, and by 2021, the figure would rise to 137 million," says Amrit. So keeping them fruitfully employed makes sense.

Says he, "As long as one is competent and physically fit, one should keep working. Why cut yourself off from society, when millions out there can benefit from your experience." Chips in Manpreet, "One can always plan for the time ahead and make a seamless



KNOW YOUR BODY:
Milkha Singh



A HELPING HAND:
Amrit Pal Singh

transition. Actors mature with different roles as they age, sportsmen too remain connected with the game in various ways. So there is no method here, just opportunities to be explored." We agree.

There are professions that have a clearcut retirement age, but what about those that don't? We talk to a cross-section of people on the matter



ONE HAS TO MOVE ON:
Manpreet Brar