

A Woman of Your Age

By Karel Murray, CSP, DREI

Completing a two hour presentation on marketing and use of technology in today's fast paced world, I felt the session had been very well received by the mixed age audience. After the session, a young lady, approximately twenty-five years old, approached me and stated, "I loved the session. I was amazed that a woman of your age actually understands and uses technology like you do!" She literally skipped away to chat with an exhibitor, leaving me speechless in her wake.

Huh.

Later that day, I visited a large bustling shopping mall to pass the time. While I browsed through the designer purse collections, another young lady approached me with a large grin. Expecting her to ask if she could assist me in my purchase, she instead exclaimed, "I KNOW YOU! I see you here all the time! You work in the mall, don't you?" Perplexed at this announcement, I told her I had never been in this mall before and asked her why she thought I worked in the mall. Her answer – "Well, for a woman of your age, you accessorize very nicely!" As if that explained everything...

Double huh...

Two days later, while I'm having dinner with several other women, the conversation moves towards hair stylists and other issues related to professional dress. One friend pointed towards me and stated knowingly, "It really works when a woman of our age color our hair in hues that compliment our skin..." Sighing, I explained my hair color was natural and women in my family gray very slowly, often keeping our hair color well into our 70's.

I'm not sure when I crossed the boundary from being a "woman" to a "woman of your age."

Granted, I have been getting older each year...everyone does. But, at least, I could treasure my mental image of a slim, sprightly thirty year old body. Okay, it might not have been sprightly, but I was young once, dang it.

At some point, the accumulation of life experiences has begun to manifest themselves on my face and general carriage of my body when I walk. In my fifties, I simply can't leap to my feet, quickly or at any other speed. If I have been seated for a while, I must consider the moves I need to make, clamp a hand to my thigh, grip an armrest and then clench my teeth as my knees shriek and the insidious ache of arthritis in my feet forces me to raise myself with caution.

If while watching television, a terrifying creature suddenly appeared and lurched in a menacing gait towards me from the kitchen, I'd probably raise my hand in a "hold it" move, roll out of the chair and use the coffee table to rise up and confront it. The critter would be conflicted, not

knowing whether to obey the “hold it” command, attack me because I appear defenseless or move on to other more sporting opportunities.

I guess that’s a sign of aging...that “whatever” attitude. I have other things (not related to age) I have to deal with right now. But let me warn you...once I’m upright, I can attack a threat with all of the fury of a ninja and deal with the physical consequences later with extra strength Advil.

If being a woman of my age means I’ve gained the life experiences that keep me relevant by offering a well rounded perspective on how our world works, I’ll gladly accept the title. If being a woman of my age is uttered in a tone of awe, I will continue to work hard to retain the moniker.

As I thrive in our new fast changing world with four generations in the workplace, I’m making a concentrated effort to take appreciation to a whole new level. Join me in my promise to judge others by their brains and stoic hearts first before I ever concentrate on the package in which they reside.

For a woman of my age, that is the best I can offer.

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