

How to Overcome Ageism in Advertising and Marketing

By [Mark Rouse](#)

The Advertising and Marketing industry has always been considered a “young person’s business.” A combination of factors has and continues to contribute to this, such as frequent demands for long hours, the rapid pace of change and the need for creative innovation. The latest thing is often considered to be the greatest thing and only young people are right on top of the latest thing, right? Well, no actually, that is not right but we’ll get into that below.

First, let’s talk demographics. The reality is that there is a shortage of intermediate talent right now and this is going to become more pronounced over the next decade. Employers need to get past false perceptions on the value of older employees in order to access a broader pool of qualified talent. In order to assist with this, older job seekers need to position themselves to be as marketable as possible. There are many false perceptions of older employees in our society. Be aware of these and make sure you address them when networking and interviewing.

False Perception #1: Older employees cannot work long hours compared to younger employees who have more energy.

- Reality: Many older employees are empty nesters. This demographic has more time and focused energy to bring to work. They no longer have to rush home to young children and are not yet taking care of elder parents.

False Perception #2: Older employees are less productive because of their age.

- Reality: In fact, this age group, with greater professional maturity, are often more productive. Their focus and time management skills are more developed, their socialization needs are lower, and they are accustomed to working autonomously.

False Perception #3: Older employees are not in touch with current markets.

- Reality: Older people are very connected. According to Statistics Canada, age is a significant predictor of Internet use. A study showed that among those aged 45-54, 85% were social media users and 70% for those ages 55-60. To compete for jobs in Advertising and Marketing, one must be an expert in new media and have strong digital proficiency. These tools are permeating society so rapidly that some would even argue that an online profile is more telling of a candidate than a resume. In order for candidates to stay current they have to be open to current trends and latest modes of communication. Companies may be less likely to hire a 50 year old, but more likely to hire a 50 year old who blogs, and has a robust LinkedIn network, and an active Twitter and Facebook

page because this is how people communicate today.

False Perception #4: Older employees are not open to a boss that is younger than they are.

- Reality: Successful candidates have put aside their egos and embraced the reality that learning can come from anyone and anywhere. If you are looking for a real world example, consider [Eric Schmidt](#) of Google, who works for two fellows that are much, much younger. If it's okay with him...

Experience Matters

Although there is a lot of opportunity and many new technologies to learn, it is important to remember that age and experience cannot be taught. Employers should be aware of the misconceptions surrounding hiring an older candidate and understand that there are many benefits to hiring an older employee. If candidates refine their skill sets to meet the needs of current modes of communication and culture they will be more likely to succeed in a job hunt in the Advertising and Marketing fields, where age is truly more about attitude than it is about years.

IQ Insight is published by [IQ PARTNERS Inc.](#) IQ PARTNERS helps intelligent companies hire better, hire less and retain more. Our services include Executive Search & Recruitment, Qualification & Assessment, Employee Retention, Career Management and Contract HR Services. We specialize in Marketing, Communications, Media, Technology, and Financial Services, and operate at the mid-to-senior management level. IQ PARTNERS' head office is in Toronto with partner offices across Canada, and internationally via the [Aravati Global Search Network](#).

[About Us](#)

[Why IQ PARTNERS?](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Subscribe](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

© March 2011 [IQ PARTNERS Inc.](#) All rights reserved.