Is your age a problem?

Asked to leave or fired: it really doesn't matter what you call it. Come Monday morning, and there's no place to go to work. Many people face that predicament, and the first thing that comes to their mind—for some at least—is that the culprit is their age. A new and younger generation is pushing them out the door.

True or false, whichever the case may be, there are indeed a few facts behind the notion: Some longer-tenured folks exhibit less energy, lose the ability to learn, and lack the agility to deal with new technology. They resist change, relying more and more on others rather than being hands-on. Their relationship with the current, younger boss might not be what it was in the past with the previous boss. And less and less are they being asked to participate and contribute in teams. In many cases, their physical appearance, clothing, and eyeglasses might be pointing to their age as continuous reminders. You as a reader know precisely whom I'm describing. And if you happen to be inching toward becoming this type of hypothetical individual, I suggest you take action now! So, what to do?

First, **never give up**. Keep your eyes open for other opportunities. In days gone by, working for the same company for a long time was viewed favorably. Nowadays, employers are looking for people experienced in a number of industries and who have wide varieties of experience. Keep in shape physically and mentally. Replace your wardrobe if that's what it might take. Include physical fitness in your daily routine. And read a lot on a variety of subjects; you want people to admire you for your knowledge and expertise. Plus, nowadays there are opportunities everywhere to take a variety of free classes for enriching your knowledge of new technologies, software, and the like.

While in transition, you should volunteer not only to get out of the house but also to mingle with people, demonstrate your flexibility, and show you're still capable of making quick decisions. Never talk about retirement. Don't give people the idea that retirement is something you're thinking about. Whenever you can, demonstrate your problem-solving ability; employers are always looking for problem solvers. If you have noncorporate experience in leadership, you should surface that in your communications and interactions with others.

People more advanced in age have at least two advantages over younger people: their very**age** and their **professional experience**. Make those into differentiators and turn them into assets.

Another comment:
In a world that is supposedly supportive of equality and diversity and equal opportunities for all, I find it difficult to believe that age is not a problem. Let us just imagine for one moment a firm whose workforce is 60% aged 40 - 50 years of age, 10% 50 - 60 years of age and the remaining 30% 25 - 40 years of age.

Over the last few years the 50 to 60 age group has been falling due to stress related illnesses and early retirement.

Personnel have been told that they have an unwritten mandate to replace workers from the 50 - 60 age group with 25 to 40 year olds to create a fairer spread of ages in the company. Personnel have also been told that if anyone leaves in the 40 - 50 age group not to replace these workers.

The company have been recruiting of late and expect to recruit people with experience aged 25 - 40.

You are aged over 50 and have extensive experience and professional training and you are looking for a job in that firm. Do you think this person will get the job?