



**Mind:** Are You a Senior?

**Body:** Gratitude Just Makes You Feel Better and Live Better

**Spirit:** A Positive Outlook

## Are You a Senior?



Just because you qualify for a senior discount doesn't necessarily make you a senior. This article will explore the senior and baby boomer cohorts and how those cohorts influence who we are, our values, and how we engage with each other and our world. A cohort refers to a group of individuals who experienced the same circumstances as they were coming of age. Living through those experiences during such a pivotal period of our lives helps shape common characteristics, attitudes, and values.

The characteristics are fairly defined and will likely survive throughout the emerging life stages— independent of age. For instance, a baby boomer may be 70 years of age today, yet may not likely identify as a senior . . . instead, they will likely continue to identify as a boomer—today and always.

### Cohorts

When we reference today's seniors, we are usually referring to those classified as the Children of The Great Depression (born 1931–1940), as well as those who served in World War II. The North American baby boomer cohort includes individuals born

between 1946 and 1964.

### Characteristics

Although there are risks involved when characterizing any group, we can draw some inferences based upon shared cohort experiences.

What do we know about today's seniors? Through the eyes of a child, the Children of The Great Depression directly experienced the lack and scarcity of the Depression. Those serving in World War II made the ultimate sacrifice, committing to a higher ideal while putting their lives on the line for all their countrymen and women. Shaped by those experiences, "seniors" tend to share the following characteristics.

- Savers
- Not Risk-takers
- Accomplished much with teamwork
- Duty comes before pleasure
- High degree of confidence in government, large employers, traditional authority figures

If you were to sum up what they want from the businesses and professionals serving them today, the answer is stability. They want to know you will be there for them tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow.

Now let's shift to baby boomers. Their focuses were the Vietnam War, sexual revolution, civil rights, women's rights, gay rights, and social reform.

**Appreciate      Respect      Value**

**Elevating the way the world sees and serves the age 50+.**

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- Influenced by the massive size of the cohort that redefined every life stage
- Less trusting of authority, employers, government . . . they were the anti-establishment folks
- Intellectually and socially individualistic
- Pursued own dreams . . . they overwhelmed the job markets and borrowed to buy
- Evaluated achievements in terms of personal fulfillment

Boomers want options from those who serve them.

## The Client Conversation

If you need a senior or boomer client to connect with a specific strategy, make sure you show how the strategy aligns with their values. For seniors, it is all about independence. They want to be safe and stay healthy so they can remain independent and not be a burden to their family. With boomers, it's lifestyle!

## Relationship with Money

Many seniors see their role with money as one of "stewardship"; they want to be good stewards of their money, preserve their nest-egg, and pass it on to the next generation. Boomers, however, tend to see their relationship with their money in terms of "ownership" . . . it is my money and I'll spend it the way I want. What Do You want?

When the seniors were asked what they wanted first from the professionals who were about to serve them, the results showed the following.

- Listen to me
- Acknowledge my wisdom and vision
- Help me stay connected

When seniors were asked what they were getting from those professionals, they reported the following.

- Cold Transactions
- Simple Information
- Directions

That disconnect is an opportunity to better serve seniors. Seniors want their "humanity" addressed first! They need to know they are welcome, acknowledged, safe, and respected.

## Conclusion

The message is pretty simple: Engage, ask questions, appreciate, listen, and learn. Businesses that "get it" will "get them" as life-long clients, even without a senior's discount.

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## Gratitude Just Makes You Feel Better and Live Better

A variety of studies confirm the positive power of feeling and expressing gratitude. According to Harvard Health Publishing: "In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude help people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships." So, let's be thankful for the benefits of being thankful!

## A Positive Outlook

"This is a wonderful day. I have never seen this one before."

*Maya Angelou*