

Meet Jan, the most powerful woman in the country

By Leon Gettler

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Aged 58 and female, personal trainer Jan Selvay fits the profile of Australia's most powerful person.

Picture: *Craig Abraham*

With baby boomers in charge, who's the most powerful person in Australia? It's the 58-year-old woman. Senioragency Australia managing director Chris Cormack said the mature boomer's power came from her ability to influence across generations.

"She influences her children and grandchildren, she influences her partner and she influences her parents," Mr Cormack said. He said marketers and advertisers of goods such as mobile phones, real estate and cars ignored her at their peril.

Her role models are neither women her age nor young mums. The ones she looks up to are mature, but strong and dynamic: Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis rather than Naomi Watts or Calista Flockhart.

The problem, Mr Cormack said, was that the only companies pitching to this group were the ones selling such things as hip protectors, hearing aids and incontinence pads.

"They continue to ignore her because they don't understand that they should be fishing where the fish are. They are looking at who is buying instead of who is influencing."

If a young woman, for example, was to buy a flat and her mother didn't like it and advised her to wait for something better, chances are the sale wouldn't go ahead.

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