



Recruiting Boomers and Senior Adults

Things to keep in mind when recruiting Boomers for your volunteer projects:

- These volunteers are adults who are exiting careers and lifestyles that took decades of education and learning to achieve. Be careful not to underestimate their experience when recruiting them as volunteers, and be prepared to fully explain your organization, the mission, the purpose of the volunteer project, etc. Have the material on hand to back it up. Sell it to them as if you were a job recruiter.
- In your recruitment materials and dialogue, pay close attention to how you describe the types of volunteers you're recruiting and the roles they will fill. Don't lose them before you've begun by emphasizing their age or abilities as related to age.
- Prior to beginning your recruitment, create specific volunteer roles and outlines for the work you expect these volunteers to be doing. This demographic will appreciate a more professional introduction to your organization.
- Older, retired volunteers are highly desirable because they are considered "trained," but be prepared for the wide variety of talents and experiences they can bring to an organization as a volunteer and do not try to create a one-shoe-fits-all volunteer position.
- Know what specific skill sets and tasks your organization needs, and be able to explain to Boomers why the roles they will be filling are vital, not just "grunt work."
- Have facts and figures about the outcomes of previous projects and organizational initiatives that involved volunteers to show that the work they will be doing is impactful on a tangible level. Promise and deliver effectively measured outcomes from the work they will be doing.
- Be flexible in your recruitment and communication styles. Allow Boomers to be in contact with you over the phone or in person, but also online and through text messaging.
- Be positive but realistic about the work the volunteers will be doing. The volunteer opportunity should be something the individual finds rewarding and stimulating.
- Boomers will appreciate tangible incentives that apply to how they can improve their new roles as engaged volunteers, such as trainings, more autonomous volunteer roles within the agency, etc. If you are able to offer that, present it clearly.

This information is adapted from:

<http://www.missoulian.com/articles/2007/03/21/news/local/news04.txt>

http://www.volunteermatch.org/nonprofits/resources/greatexpectations/GreatExpectations_FullReport.pdf

<http://nationalservicerresources.org/files/legacy/filemanager/download/727/boomers.pdf>