BRINGING IN THE BOOMERS:
How to Recruit them as Volunteers

Presented by
Arlene Stepputat, MA
Manager of Volunteer Services
Visiting Nurse and Hospice Care, Santa Barbara, CA
Guidelines

*****************************************************************
Take care of yourself so that you can help take care of others.
Don’t hurt yourself and don’t hurt others.
Use everything for your upliftment, learning, and growth.
Growing up as a baby boomer- traditional roles, formalities, the postwar explosion

Born between 1946-1964

80 Million  about 73% of our total population

From 2010 to 2030, the 65+ population will “spike” by 75% to over 69 million people.
What Influenced the Boomers?

Viet Nam  Peace Corps  Sex, drugs and rock and roll
Expanding suburbia and cookie cutter GI housing tracts
Protests and Civil Actions- anti-war, civil rights, women's lib
Economic prosperity  Watergate
"Don't trust anyone over 30!"
Boomers are transforming volunteerism!

- They already volunteer at a higher rate than the "greatest generation." Nearly one third of all boomers volunteered formally with an organization.

- They are more educated and have a higher percentage of white collar jobs.

- Women have seen their skills and talents used in the workplace and have a sense of purpose larger than the previous generation.

- They yearn to make a difference and many of them are even starting their own nonprofits!
Recruiting to appeal to Boomers

or

What do Boomers want?

They want to feel that they are contributing to their community in meaningful ways.

Key words that appeal- freedom, autonomy, making an impact, leaving a legacy, meaning, community

Boomers want self-directed choice!

They want roles that appeal to 4 major areas

1- Skill- use their highly educated experience in meaningful ways
2- Duration-with multiple pursuits they want options
3- Scheduling and time commitments-flexibility vs rigid same day same time
4- Self initiation- a desire to create a self directed project
The Entrepreneurial Volunteer

Baby boomers are innovators with an entrepreneurial spirit.

Usually a skilled professional with a specific talent that has an idea to support the organization. This boomer is either retired or is semi retired but wants to contribute. There is no precedent for this work being done before in the agency by a volunteer. The boomer creates the role or supports a role with a new definition allowing for greater independence and greater accountability.

Case A- Jim-a retired businessman whose work involved dealing with high end watches around the world. Since retirement he had worked with several nonprofits reducing the cost of overall spending and now he wants to help us.

Case B-Michael-an independent contractor offering to do handyman jobs around the home for hospice patients for free.

If these gentlemen walked into your office today making their offers, what would you do?

Which one succeeded and which one was discouraged?

Questions to consider to Recruit Boomers
1. Do you have projects that are enjoyable, satisfying, meaningful?

2. Do you have options that attract diversity to tap into a multicultural society with an increase in Hispanic population growing?

3. Does your organization have a positive reputation regarding how volunteers are trained and valued?

4. Do you utilize current volunteers to train, to recruit, to mentor incoming volunteers?

5. Are you creating new learning opportunities in a variety of ways? In services, webinars, book club discussion or movie event?

6. Are you collaborating in the community to attract this age group? RSVP? Veterans groups? Adult learning centers or community gathering places?

7. Do you have flexibility in training and options for volunteer commitment?

8. Have you considered workplace volunteer opportunities? (Think United Way's Day of Caring)

9. Do your volunteers feel a sense of a community among themselves? Within the organization?

10. Is there an opportunity for input, innovation and consensus decision making in your department?

Questions for reflection about Boomers in my organization
How many volunteers are currently working in my organization?

How many of them are boomers? Or what percentage are boomers?

Would baby boomers be attracted to working with us?
If yes, why?

If not, what needs to change?

What organizational challenges do I see in bringing in more baby boomers?

If I were to take one action step in the next two weeks to enhance recruiting boomers, I would . . .

Resources

Aging and Baby Boomers, a presentation by Professor Michael M. Mullen, Pepperdine University, 2007


Everybody Ready Series: Boomer Volunteers: A Strategy for Capacity Building, Jill Friedman Fixer and Gail Lorenz, Energize Inc, October 2006