

Setting Direction for A Baby Boomer Project

Step One: Secure Funding Resources

Questions: Who has a particular interest in Baby Boomers - health care, economic development, work force development, the United Way? What is in it for them (WIFT)? Who has available resources? Can we partner with other organizations and share costs?

Tips: Determine what the benefits are to the prospective funders. Look at past funders. Investigate the possibility of local foundations. Secure multiple funding sources.

What I/We will do:

Step Two: Set up an Advisory Team

Questions: Who do we know in our organization that has an interest in expanding the number of Baby Boomer volunteers? Who has expertise in volunteer management? Who can we recruit? Who is new to our organization? Do we have representation from our whole service area? Is our group diverse?

Tips: Develop an Advisory Team member job description.
Recruit members for specific tasks and for a particular length of time.
Include key decision makers on the team to add to the Team's credibility and to result in quicker action.
A media representative may be very helpful.

What I/We will do:

Step Three: Organize and Hold Focus Groups

Questions: Can the Advisory Team help us identify potential focus group participants? Who do we want at the table - only Baby Boomers, nonprofit representatives, businesses, a cross section of community members? Who will make the calls to invite people to attend? Where will the groups be held? What questions will we ask? Who will facilitate? Who will record?

Tips: Develop about eight questions for a ninety minute session. Have 8-10 people in the focus groups. Share “ground rules” for the focus group to include such items as: Everyone participates, stay focused on the question and different opinions are welcome. Provide food. Put questions on a laptop ahead of sessions as preparation. Use the focus group sessions to identify potential people to be further involved in project. Create a database of focus group attendees to help facilitate future communication and tracking. Write thank you notes to participants and invite them to the summits and future Baby Boomer activities.

What I/We will do:

Step Four: Identify Key Issues

Questions: What are the main pieces of information from the focus groups? Did the results vary between focus groups? Did the variations seem related to location, the composition of the group or some other factor? What are the key issues the participants identified that must be addressed in order to recruit and retain Baby Boomer volunteers?

Tips: Review all notes from focus groups and identify recurring themes. Pull out any notes that illustrate the themes. Note any comments that are very different or provide innovative ideas. Determine the reasons for any variations between focus groups.

What I/We will do:

Step Five: Hold Community Summits

Questions: Are we clear on the purpose of the summits? What are the 4-6 topics we will discuss? How many summits will we hold? What will motivate people to attend? How will we promote the events? Who will be the master of ceremonies? Who will facilitate each group discussion? Who will record? How will participants know the results of their input?

Tips: Invite the media to attend. Publicize the events through multiple channels - word of mouth, newspaper, radio, flyers placed in heavy traffic areas, bookmarks at the library, etc. Reward individuals or teams for recruiting attendees. Invite key community members to attend (Invite the Chamber of Commerce). Use the summits as an opportunity to recruit individuals to help with the projects and to educate the community about Baby Boomers.

What I/We will do:

Step Six: Develop a Plan

Questions: Who will be involved in the plan development? What will be the scope of the plan? Will we conduct a pilot? Will our plan be for action in phases? How will we evaluate the success of each part of the plan? Who will be responsible for getting the work done? What are the timelines?

Tips: Develop action plan with as much detail as possible. State who is responsible for each piece and timelines. Include outcome measures. Meet regularly (in person, via conference calls, email etc.) to monitor, follow through, and make adjustments. Reward those who are actively engaged. Report progress in the media. Celebrate successes.

What I/We will do: