

STEP 4:
OUTREACH

10 STEPS FOR ENGAGING ADULTS 50+

A RESOURCE OF THE
GEN2GEN LEARNING HUB

Developed by

Encore.org's Gen2Gen campaign

and

The Alliance for Strong Families
and Communities' Second Acts Initiative



OUTREACH

Outreach is the first step in the process of finding candidates to consider for your position. This process is equal parts planning, positioning, relationship-building and marketing. Here are factors to consider when planning to reach out to adults 50+.

MESSAGES

- Appeal to the experience of adults 50+ and make clear your interest in our talent, skills, knowledge, judgment, patience, persistence, reliability or other qualities.
- Keep the tone simple, emotional and inspiring.
- Use stories to convey impact and outcomes.
- Use images, ideally of real people in real places that readers will recognize. Make sure they look like people you're trying to engage.
- Include pictures of men, who may be looking for indications that you welcome them - and that they wouldn't be the only man on the team.
- Use headlines that are short, targeted and prominent enough to grab attention.
Example: Experience Needed. Yours!



IDEAS FOR MESSAGE CONTENT APPEALING TO THE INTERESTS AND MOTIVATIONS OF ADULTS 50+:

Lead with the most important idea, usually about the difference this role can make in a child's life or in the community. Details about when and where are secondary.

- Adults 50+ have a lot of knowledge and experience to share with young people.
- Studies show that kids working with adults 50+ learn social skills, do better in school,
- reduce risky behaviors, and gain positive role models.

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- Adults 50+ are resilient and have coped with a lot over the years. They can use these experiences to support kids facing difficult life challenges.
- Working with kids puts adults 50+ in touch with others who share their interests, and can lead to new friendships.
- This is a meaningful way to give back and make a difference in the community.
- Many children look up to adults and respond especially well to older people.
- People who do this kind of work are generally healthier, have lower medical costs and live longer.
- It's fun! Engaged people say they are happier and more satisfied with their lives.

MATERIALS

- Fliers still work and tear-off slips can be helpful when posting them.
- Notices on Facebook, LinkedIn, websites or elsewhere online should be tailored to those sites. Match the message to the medium and the audience.
- Keep type size at 12-point or larger to ensure readability.
- Don't put too much information into a notice. Always include links to your website, the position description and the online application, using links if the posting is online.
- Always include a clear call to action so readers will know what steps to take to apply or get more information. Test this with adults 50+ to make sure it resonates.

MESSENGERS

- People respond best to someone they know or can identify with. Use messengers who look like those you want to engage.
- Ask messengers to tell their personal stories, listen and build relationships to inspire the interest of potential recruits.
- Consider video as a tool to get inspiring messengers in front of adults 50+ online.
- The most common reason people give for why they volunteered is this: "Someone I know asked me." Use current staff and volunteers who are 50+ (your champions) to spread the word and to follow up with or answer questions from candidates.



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- Create small incentives to thank your messengers for their efforts and to recognize recruiting successes.
- Great messengers are often people who work in local places where older adults spend time, and who are passionate about your mission.

METHODS

- Word of mouth from a trusted source is often the most successful form of outreach.
- Post information in local businesses and public places such as grocery stores, libraries, banks or community health centers where adults 50+ are likely to be.
- Distribute flyers in neighborhood gathering places like coffee shops or farmers' markets as well as at neighborhood meetings, community information sessions, and events.
- Use your website, social media pages and other online postings to make the position visible.
- Make the posting and how to apply easy to find on your website.
- Ask other organizations to help you spread the word in their newsletters, social media pages or events.
- Consider simple ads or stories in local or community newspapers.



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TAKING ACTION

Use this worksheet to tailor messages, materials, messengers, and methods for the positions you're looking to fill. Note: different roles will likely require different strategies!

OUTREACH PLANNING CHECKLIST

(Use a separate checklist for each role you are recruiting for)

MESSAGES

Role: _____

- Place most important idea first
- Explain opportunity to make a difference
- State explicitly why you seek adults 50+
- Include emotional appeal to impact
- Include intellectual appeal to qualifications
- Use stories that inspire
- Use simple, engaging language and tone
- Include clear call to action
- Test well with target audiences

What messages will we test for this role?

MATERIALS

Role: _____

- Use images that target audience can relate to (consider diversity, gender, etc.)
- Grab attention through graphics, layout, color, clever headlines, etc.
- Visually relate to each other, regardless of platform (paper, online, giveaways, etc.)
- Simple, readable, visually appealing
- Include links to website, position, application
- Test well with target audiences

What materials will we use for this role?



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MESSENGERS

Role: _____

- Look like those you want to engage
- Have local connections and knowledge
- Have compelling stories to tell
- Can speak from personal experience
- Listen well to “get” and address concerns
- Come across as authentic and genuine
- Prepared to “make the ask”
- Available on video, online, by telephone, etc. as well as in person

Who would make a great messenger to get the word out about this role?

METHODS

Role: _____

- Feature word of mouth and personal connection, the best way to engage
- Include online postings
- Include social media
- Include flyers in community gathering spots
- Include events attended by your audience
- Include partner organizations who can spread the word
- Include champions who will endorse you
- Include local papers and ads

What methods would work best for this role?



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MORE INFORMATION

- **Boomer Volunteer Engagement Guide** (bit.ly/gen2genvolunteer)
 - Chapter 5 Developing Connections: Networking and Cultivation pages 73-85
- **Encore Talent Works** (bit.ly/gen2gentoolkit)
 - **Tap Volunteers: Recruit** (bit.ly/gen2genrecruit)
 - **Hire Encore: Recruit** (bit.ly/gen2genrecruit2)

