Step 1:

Determine Network Mission, Vision and Values
The Mission Statement is the network’s fundamental purpose, its primary reason for being. This first step is probably the most difficult and time-consuming because group
members will each have their own view as to the mission of the network. Breaking into small groups to draft potential mission statements and then coming together to look at all of the possibilities and write one final statement is an excellent method to start people thinking in terms of compromise and team work. This process will also help the group coalesce. Depending on the size of the group, plan for at least two hours to complete this first task.

**MISSION:**
First, create a mission statement that defines the network’s purpose for existing. To do this, elicit words, phrases and ideas from everyone, and then condense them into a simple paragraph, free of jargon. As the statement is written, make sure it answers the following three questions:
1. What are the needs we exist to address?
2. What are we doing to address those needs?
3. What principles guide our work?

**VISION:**
Vision is a view of the future, where the network wants to be, and what it wants to become. It is the network’s long-range goal, what it is working toward. Vision is closely related to dreams. Defining the vision includes setting goals of where the network wants to go and objectives for how to get there. Well-chosen goals will keep the network pointed in the right direction for as long as it exists. They create a roadmap for the future and should be carefully defined.

**VALUES:**
Values are the beliefs that govern behavior as a network. When creating a values statement, consider the principles behind the scenes that are guiding the network and the way it operates. Announce these to the world through the values statement. It will prove to be invaluable, especially when the network faces a challenge as to purpose. It is then that the network’s beliefs will be tested. Adhering to values can boost image and confidence as an effective network. Make sure everyone in the network knows its mission, its vision and its values well enough to be able to explain them to anyone outside the network. Then, put them into action.

**Step 2:**

**Create Effective Leadership**
After the mission, vision and values statements have been completed and there is a consensus among the group, network leadership can be discussed and determined. The 57 respondents to the comprehensive survey were asked to identify all functions that their area agencies on aging perform related to their elder abuse prevention network. Only two respondents stated that the area agency is not involved in the elder abuse prevention network. Thus, 55 of the 57 respondents (96.5%) indicated that the area agency is a member of their local elder abuse prevention network. In addition to the role of member, three other roles of area agencies were identified: lead agency, technical
support to the network, and resource provider. Nearly half of the respondents (26, or 45.6%) reported that area agencies provide all four identified functions. In networks that rate themselves as very effective, area agencies participate in an average of 3.2 of the four roles identified in the survey. In more than half (52.6%), the area agency is the lead agency. The surveys indicate that area agency leadership and support are critical to elder abuse prevention network success.

Lead agencies were found in 84% of the survey respondents. Nearly two-thirds of the lead agencies are appointed (as opposed to elected), and a third of these are appointed by the local area agency on aging. In many instances, co-chairs with one/two-year terms of office were found to be most effective. In terms of leadership to create an effective network, a steering committee and founding co-chairs usually take on the initial steps of forming a coalition. Depending on the size of the network, it is also recommended that an executive committee be created to oversee the network’s activities, as well as other committees to accomplish specific tasks. Examples of such tasks include developing policies and protocols, training bank personnel in fraud prevention and detection, conducting multi-disciplinary case reviews, and implementing outreach and education activities.

Step 3:

Build An Effective Coalition Infrastructure

The ability of elder abuse prevention networks to work collaboratively with others is key to building an effective coalition. Responses from the comprehensive survey and the teleconference reveal the importance of building an effective coalition infrastructure in the success of very effective elder abuse prevention networks. In addition to working collaboratively with others, involving broad membership is a key strategy in building an effective coalition infrastructure. In the survey, collaboration was the most often cited reason for network effectiveness. Of the 26 respondents who rate their networks as very effective, 57.7% stress the importance of collaboration—identifying key stakeholders and involving them in the network. Notable infrastructure components indicated in the survey are set out below.

Creating a strong, integrated infrastructure of partnering organizations is critical to the success of the network. Large, inclusive and diverse memberships correlated to very effective networks in the survey and teleconference responses. Findings indicated that responsibilities can be shared and outcomes can be most effective when tasks are delegated to the appropriate stakeholders. Three components of the comprehensive survey asked specific questions concerning elder abuse prevention network membership: number of agencies/entities in the network; number of people participating in the network; and types of organizations in the network. In general, the very effective networks are collaborative and often involve a broad range of stakeholders. They have strong area agency leadership and support, participation of their legal communities, and regular, well-attended monthly meetings.

Step 4:
Promote a Strong Commitment to Purpose
Responses from the elder abuse prevention networks that rate themselves as very effective indicate that a strong commitment to purpose by the members is essential to their success. One of the most cited reasons for network effectiveness by very effective networks was having caring individuals who are dedicated to the cause of elder abuse prevention. They “find individuals that actually care and let their spirit spread” throughout their networks. Successful coalitions have members who are committed to elder abuse prevention, regularly attend coalition meetings, and participate in decisionmaking.

Key strategies to develop this commitment emerged from survey responses. Effective coalitions have:
• Committed members
• Shared visions and goals
• Participatory decision-making
• Cohesive, cooperative and trusting environments

Frequency of meetings:
• 65% of very effective coalitions meet monthly
• 31% of less effective coalitions meet monthly

Good attendance:
(More than half of members attending meetings)
• 58% of very effective coalitions report good attendance
• 14% of less effective coalitions report good attendance

Step 5:

Create a Results-Oriented Approach
Responses from the comprehensive survey and the teleconference indicate that self-rated very effective elder abuse prevention networks have developed strategies that lead to specific action. Several of the very effective networks recommend that the key to a successful coalition is to outline a clear achievable goal, delineate tasks, and work toward achieving that goal. Creating a task-oriented work environment is a key strategy. Qualitative data were obtained from survey respondents through open-ended questions. Very effective networks have focused, innovative, culturally competent program objectives driven by community need. Twenty-three percent (23%) of very effective networks assign projects to motivate coalition members compared to 10% of less effective networks. Below is a list of projects and activities reported by effective coalitions:

Public and Professional Awareness/ Training
• Publications
• Plays and videos
• Prevention training for postal workers, law enforcement, bank tellers and clergy
• Protocol development with hospitals, coroners and law enforcement
• Elder Abuse Awareness Campaign
- Professional Awareness Day
- Senior Awareness Week
- Placemats in local restaurants
- "Safe at Home" magnets for elderly homebound clients

**Advocacy Activities**
- Legislative advocacy for abuse statutes
- Increased prosecutions
- Establishment of investigation and prosecution units in detective offices

**Victim Services**
- Home safety/security reviews
- Home repair contractors
- Multidisciplinary teams
- Abuse/neglect/exploitation check sheet
- Volunteer Guardianship Program
- Elder Abuse Interdisciplinary Team
- "Bridge Room" for Adult Protective Services (personal items/food for victims)
- Support Groups
- Emergency Housing
- Transitional Housing

**Step 6:**

**Identify Performance Outcome Measures**
Performance measures are tools used to measure the success of a project. Three common terms used in the discussion of performance measures are: inputs, outputs and outcomes. Inputs are the resources needed to accomplish the project, such as materials, equipment and supplies. Outputs focus on the level of activity in a particular project, such as the number of brochures distributed or the number of clients served. Outcomes measure the actual results achieved and the effectiveness or success of the project. Instruments used to provide measurement of outcomes include surveys, self-administered scales, direct observation, pre- and post- tests, or self-reports. The S.M.A.R.T. method is often used to clearly define desired outcomes. S.M.A.R.T. refers to:

Specific  
Measurable  
Aggressive (yet achievable)  
Relevant to the project  
Time bound

Following are examples of outcome measures listed by elder abuse prevention networks that participated in the comprehensive survey:
- 130% increase in elder abuse cases reported since baseline year of 2001
- 67% increase in substantiation rates of elder abuse in counties served
- 25% improvement in knowledge about the indicators of elder abuse
- 50% increase in victims of late-life domestic violence achieving self-sufficiency
Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) is a process that provides a method for identifying and evaluating performance outcome measures, monitoring the progress of the project, and making changes as needed. The CQI process increases service quality and creates team spirit within the coalition. A CQI process may include the following steps:

- Identify a process/performance to improve
- Organize a team to improve the process
- Select the steps in the process to be measured
- Implement the process/performance improvement
- Evaluate the improvement

http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/ncearoot/main_site/pdf/EffectiveLocalElderAbusePreventionNetworks.pdf