

Microvolunteering

According to the 2011 Deloitte Impact Study, 71 percent of employees state they do not participate in corporate volunteering because they don't have enough time to volunteer. Microvolunteering is a solution.

Microvolunteering is a form of volunteering where tasks are completed by a volunteer or a team of volunteers in small increments of time. In almost all cases, microvolunteering tasks are completed online or via an Internet-enabled device, such as a smart phone. More and more, Employee Volunteer Programs are offering microvolunteering as an innovative way to engage employees with work limitations and time restraints and to support communities that are further out of reach.

Characteristics

- Time-efficient and easy to implement. Micro-actions can be conducted anywhere, at any time and so therefore people can control the environment in which they volunteer their time, thereby making it potentially safer than traditional volunteer opportunities and more appealing. You can do it while watching TV, on the bus or in your pajamas. You're not restricted to being at a certain place at a certain time anymore. Volunteering can go wherever you go.
Most micro-actions are non-committal, which means that one of the barriers that inhibits people to perform traditional volunteering, has now been stripped away. You can dip in and dip out whenever you want.
- Innovative way to engage employee with work limitations and restraints or support communities that are further out of reach. People who are shy and uncomfortable with a group of strangers might feel more at home with microvolunteering as they can now volunteer in their own company. The same applies to people with physical disabilities. Those who perform traditional philanthropy and who want to do more, now have the option to achieve more in between their traditional philanthropic commitments. Microvolunteering empowers people to realize they can make a difference, as they can now do something that benefits a worthy cause on their own terms, which gives them greater control over the difference they can make.

Benefits

- Microvolunteering makes volunteering an on-going, continuous experience
- Builds relationship with a particular non-profit
- Enhances volunteer's morale, skills and well-being
- Challenges the employee to solve real issues on flexible conditions
- Is a networking opportunity
- Complements hands-on volunteering efforts (in case of e-volunteering)

Challenges

- It is difficult to engage large groups of volunteers

Examples:

On-site Microvolunteering:

- Writing cards to veterans or other social groups
- Assembling small kits for those in need

E-volunteering:

- Tutoring students from your desk for 30 minutes per week (telementoring)
- Translating for non-profits
- Designing logos and marketing kits
- Even brainstorming, ex. providing legal, business, medical, agricultural or any other expertise

Excellent EVP offer “microvolunteering” opportunities to employees as a way to increase the convenience and volume of skills-based volunteering. More than 350 Kraft Foods employees across the globe reached out to 134 nonprofits in seven countries via microvolunteering to donate their marketing research, social media, translation and other skills.

Kraft Food’s Employee Volunteer Program involves employees who can’t commit long-term by offering microvolunteering to aid nonprofits via the Internet, requiring only a few minutes of their time. Employees can assist a clinic in Haiti, select the best logo for a school in Peru or translate a blog entry into Spanish all while riding the train to work, waiting for a meeting or standing in line at the supermarket.

Feed my Starving Children is a nonprofit organization that ships packaged meals specially formulated for malnourished children to nearly 70 countries around the world. Through its Mobile Pack program, Feed my Starving Children brings the equipment and the materials to Thompson Reuters. The company provides funding, space and volunteers and in 2 hours meals are packaged by volunteers. There are visible results, including the orientation in 2 hours.

Amway operated a literacy pen pal volunteering opportunity or one-on-one mentoring at inner-city schools in the US. Employees regularly exchange letters with students at schools with low literacy rates. This simple act motivates children to practice their skills and get rewarded by meeting their “pen pal” each year.

Currently, more than 120 Chesapeake employees visit the nearby Pauline E. Mayer Emergency Children’s Shelter during their lunch hour or after work on a weekly basis to spend one-on-one time with a child at the shelter. This type of commitment help abused and neglected youth who live daily in temporary housing.

The [Points of Light Corporate Institute](#) is the go-to resource for community-minded companies looking to build and expand effective employee volunteer programs. With our global network of 250 affiliates and a team of experts, we can help you create a customized volunteer program, engage your employees, learn best practices, network with other leading companies, and gain visibility for leadership and excellence.

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