



# **MAKING SOCIAL IMPACT ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL EMPLOYEE ROLES AND SETTINGS**



**POINTS  
OF LIGHT**



## INTRODUCTION

Engaging the entire workforce in your company's social impact strategy is a valuable pursuit. Beyond meeting often lofty volunteer participation goals, it's about empowering each colleague to create positive change in the communities and causes that matter to them. Doing so can increase employee productivity, cultivate pride and lead to higher engagement scores and retention rates. More importantly, ensuring equitable access to these activities demonstrates corporate values and directly ties to fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion for employees.

It's about empowering each colleague to create positive change in the communities and causes that matter to them.

Prioritizing access to social impact initiatives enhances individual employee experiences and strengthens a company's ability to make a meaningful difference in the communities where they operate. However, ensuring impartial access to social impact initiatives is a challenge, especially for frontline employees, staff with non-traditional or fixed schedules, and those you might call "non-wired" or "unplugged" because they aren't connected to computers and communication channels all day. CSR leaders must strategically address those nuances to ensure that every team member, regardless of their role, feels invited and has real opportunity to participate in the company's social impact activities.

There's also an external rationale for creating accessibility for all. More employee contributions and volunteers translate to greater impact, wider reach and improved effectiveness for nonprofit partners that are working toward improving social conditions. Business leaders also share this aspiration, given the [rising global consumer and investor expectations for companies](#) to not just deliver on profits but actively create long-term value for all stakeholders including communities. This is true for companies of all sizes, including for [small business owners who agree with the public that supporting local issues through both volunteer and informal social impact activities is important](#).

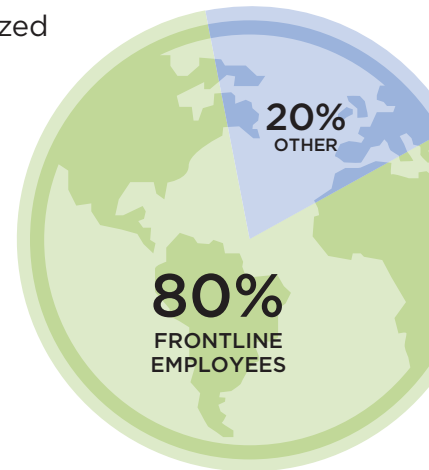
So, how can you ensure that all employees, even those in diverse roles and work settings, can easily engage in your company's social impact strategy? Let's start by taking a look at the workforce you may be trying to engage.

## DIVERSE ROLES AND WORK SETTINGS

Although they may be referred to as "harder to reach," there is no lack of interest and motivation among these colleagues. These positions are integral to nearly every sector of the economy, serving as the public face of many organizations and the back-end engine behind others.

Frontline employees, those who work with customers or are directly involved in making or selling a product or providing a service (such as cashiers, call center representatives, bank tellers, salespeople, couriers, scientists, flight attendants, financial advisors, field technicians and housekeeping staff), represent **80% of the global workforce or more than two billion workers**. These roles can be salaried or hourly, exempt or non-exempt, full time or part time, unionized or not, and exist in myriad industries from healthcare and transportation, to manufacturing and retail and beyond.

Your company's workforce might also include scores of staff who support your organization but aren't technically employees of your company such as consultants, freelancers, independent agents or franchisees. While they may have more control over their schedule, they might not have full access to your company's communications or volunteer technology. Even if you consider them part of the team, you might not have influence or authority over their participation due to contractual agreements.



CSR leaders at just about every company are faced with the challenge of engaging one or more of the roles mentioned above. They might also encounter teams that are composed of essential supply chain, logistics or operations and maintenance associates who do not work a typical 9-to-5 schedule and may work overnight shifts. As companies continue to navigate their return-to-office strategies or have abandoned offices altogether, you might consider that your remote workers who are geographically dispersed also fall into the harder-to-reach category because their location doesn't lend itself to traditional in-person, group opportunities.

Even when it seems that a shared interest in and understanding of the company's social impact goals exists, employees in some diverse roles may feel disconnected and undervalued, as some companies fail to (or choose not to) extend all benefits or programs to them. They may not believe they are able to take advantage of work-life policies and activities without jeopardizing their employment status or advancement. This single factor can significantly affect an employee's experience, outlook and perception of their employer, which, in turn, has implications for the business and their supervisors, who must address performance and retention goals.

Check out [Edelman's 2023 Special Report: Trust at Work](#) that highlights the disconnection felt by deskless workers.

That's why it is critical to engage employees with roles who are harder to reach. Many are drawn to volunteer experiences or the opportunity to participate in social impact activities, particularly if it offers a sense of meaning absent from their daily tasks. The lack of involvement doesn't just potentially short circuit their contributions to the company's impact and their own sense of civic engagement but can perpetuate feelings of marginalization and disconnection.

## UNIVERSAL CHALLENGES

Regardless of industry, employee roles or work environment, several commonalities surface when you begin exploring the challenges that CSR leaders face when engaging certain populations of their workforce. They include:

- **Culture:** Company-supported volunteering or other civic engagement activities may be perceived as separate from the core business or a distraction from work instead of integrated with business strategy and performance goals.
- **Communication barriers:** Limited access to communication channels, such as email, the intranet, or company-issued mobile devices can limit awareness and make it harder to effectively disseminate information about social impact opportunities.
- **Scheduling and flexibility constraints:** Scheduling is especially a concern for managers that need to maintain consistent coverage and staffing levels. The same holds true for workers with limited ability to “step away” from their work because—for example—the desk, phone, route or production line always needs to be covered.
- **Location or geography:** If workers are based in remote or dispersed locations, coordinating and organizing social impact initiatives—many of which occur in person—may be logistically challenging.
- **Policies:** Some company policies can be exclusionary to certain segments of the workforce. Lack of clarity and awareness about eligibility requirements, guidelines and supportive programs, such as volunteer time off (VTO), dollars for doers programs and other incentives can turn social impact activities into an additional burden rather than an opportunity for personal growth and contribution. Many businesses also have strict solicitation policies that disallow certain activities while on company time or on company property. This issue must be carefully navigated, typically in partnership with HR and your employee relations team.
- **Supervisor support:** Middle management wields considerable power and might not yet grasp the transformative potential of community engagement, especially if their performance is measured primarily on metrics, production or sales targets.
- **Diverse motivations:** Not all employees are equally interested or passionate about participating in social impact initiatives.



Addressing these challenges requires a thoughtful and intentional approach that considers the unique circumstances and needs of your frontline and non-wired co-workers.

## A PATH TO ENGAGEMENT: SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

Engaging employees from diverse roles and work settings necessitates a tailored approach that reflects their distinct roles, challenges and perspectives. Points of Light went straight to the source and asked corporate citizenship leaders what they've been testing, what's showing promise and what's been successful. While there's likely not one solution that solves all challenges nor fits all roles and work environments, there are strategies and approaches to consider that can lead to inclusive involvement.

### *Understand business needs and operational guardrails*

First and foremost, seek to understand the employee populations you are hoping to engage. Get to know what might work best for these groups by talking to both leaders and employees. Find out how schedules work and if there's any flexibility, what activities interest them and when they are at their busiest—whether that's a specific time of day, day of the week or season. For example, Altria's community impact team realized that they would obtain higher engagement from their community engagement leaders in Sales if they scheduled planning and training meetings and office hours on certain days of the week when these employees aren't required to be in the field. If you can, organize an opportunity to get out in the field to join your sales colleagues, work a day in one of your retail branches, or shadow a call center shift to fully experience their circumstances.

### *Adopt policies and practices to make participation more attainable*

Even the most magnificent corporate social impact strategy depends on a solid implementation plan. The corporate environment is full of policies and standard operating procedures that clearly outline expectations and how things get done. It's no different when it comes to social impact. Create an enabling environment through policies and practices such as:


- **Provide Volunteer Time Off (VTO):** A policy that provides paid time off to volunteer during an employee's workday or shift is a foundational element of making participation easy and a tangible demonstration of your company's commitment to community engagement. More and more companies are offering VTO. In fact, [82% of 2023 honorees of The Civic 50](#)—representing a wide variety of industries and employee roles—offer employees VTO. This is true of retailers like Lowe's, that offers eight hours for full-time and four hours for part-time associates and a materials science company, Dow, that offers 12 hours during scheduled working hours to all employees around the world—including



#### **KEEP IN MIND**

Approving and implementing a VTO policy is just one step toward the cultural shift that needs to take place to get everyone on board. Continual education and reinforcement of the policy to employees and their supervisors are critical to adoption.





their sizeable manufacturing workforce—and supports both volunteer and employee resource group participation. Establishing a VTO policy often requires crunching numbers and making a strong business case to senior leaders, but offering VTO to all employees is essential to addressing the challenges of equitable access.

- **Offer flex time:** If VTO for all employees is a tough sell, offer “flex time” or allow employees to participate while “on the clock” and don’t exclude employees by only allowing those in salaried and exempt roles to participate in this way. In an increasingly asynchronous workforce, creating flex time for participation means that staff are granted the opportunity to start and end their shift a few hours later to accommodate participating in an activity. This is especially important when it comes to team-building efforts or large-scale, companywide activities such as a day of service. Since these events are tied to increased pride, productivity, camaraderie and retention, there is a business case for ensuring that everyone can participate.
- **Shut down:** Berkshire Bank offers VTO to employees for participating in company-sponsored activities, but they go one step further and close their offices and financial centers early throughout their Northeastern footprint so that as many employees as possible can participate in their annual Xtraordinary Day. They’ve been doing this for nearly a decade and communicate with customers well in advance, which has the dual benefit of making them aware of both limited hours *and* the commitment the bank is making to the communities where they operate.
- **Organize company-wide activities:** One thing we often hear from employees is that they want to get involved, but they don’t know where to begin. Offering company-sponsored and organized activities either at a global, national, regional, local or even team level a few times a year makes engagement so much easier. These opportunities are typically well-communicated and serve as galvanizing moments for all employees, which makes it harder for supervisors to deter participation.
- **Self-serve:** While we advocate for company-organized activities, we also advocate for a way for all employees to take action on their own. This approach can range from a DIY toolkit to a one-stop-shop technology platform that offers ways to [search and sign up for local projects](#), match financial gifts or donate to workplace giving campaigns, or a dedicated intranet site that hosts a library of resources or short training courses to enlighten and educate around topics of interest. Of course, having these resources available is one thing; providing access to them takes careful planning and working with other functional areas to ensure employees in diverse roles can take advantage of them at their convenience. For example, they may need a company email address to sign into your volunteer management system or a computer kiosk at their facility to give them a chance to peruse upcoming campaigns or find answers to their programmatic questions when it’s convenient for them.

- **Recognize and reward:** Formally recognizing employee efforts has several benefits to the business. It can boost morale, support belonging, model leadership behaviors, reinforce their value to the organization and to the impact your company wants to make in communities, and inspire teammates to seek out ways to get involved. This holds true for all employees so ensure that you are finding ways to include, lift up, share stories and reward participation and leadership from staff who represent diverse roles and work settings to showcase to their colleagues that involvement is possible and encouraged. Liberty Mutual encourages all employees to volunteer in their communities and for causes that matter to them personally. When employees track their personal volunteer time through the company, they become eligible to win a \$500 grant to award to the nonprofit of their choice. Further, if they volunteer at least 50 hours in a year, they're awarded a paid day off to volunteer. For outstanding service of 100 hours or more, employees can win grants toward a nonprofit of choice ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000.

### *Gain visible and vocal support from senior leaders*

When frontline and non-wired employees see that leadership values and supports their participation in the company's social impact initiatives, it can increase their motivation to participate. Endorsement from and participation by senior leaders conveys the importance of creating positive community change, fostering a culture of social responsibility. Their behavior serves as a model, showcasing permission to direct reports and inspiring all to participate and contribute. Help executives understand how their active participation can help achieve their own goals around connecting with and being more visible to different employee populations—especially if they are new leaders at your company. Invite them to roll up their sleeves and work alongside colleagues from all over the company. By aligning with these efforts, senior leaders solidify social impact as integral to the organization's identity and long-term strategy.



#### **KEEP IN MIND**

Leadership permission to get involved must be paired with real, equitable access. Saying that all employees are invited to join in won't help if there are still operational barriers that prevent inclusion.

### *Educate and equip middle managers*

Middle managers are a critical bridge between program implementation and employee participation. Effective ways to engage them include:

- **Share the business case and resources:** Let middle managers know that participating in social impact activities can support performance and business goals like retention, team building and productivity. Your corporate citizenship team might design a roadshow where you meet with managers of functions that pose barriers to inclusion to discuss the goals they have for their teams and educate them on ways that volunteering together can help



achieve them. Regularly provide them with helpful resources to empower them to say “yes” to their employees’ requests to participate, such as policy documents, answers to frequently asked questions, key messaging and a calendar of upcoming activities. Organizations like SAP have built out a Manager & Leader toolkit that helps articulate the benefits of engaging in volunteerism and pro bono consulting beyond its social and environmental impact.

- **Collaborate:** Adopt a cross-functional approach when designing your social impact programs each year and get feedback from middle managers for these functions/roles so they can recommend what types of opportunities would enable their team’s participation.
- **Present data:** Sharing volunteer data collected through systems and surveys helps gain middle-management buy-in. Because managers of these roles are often metric-oriented (e.g., production and sales quotas, response times and call volume, etc.), presenting data like departmental participation rates or employee survey feedback that shows the correlation between community engagement and increases in retention, might be a motivator to drive up their numbers. Presenting data also connects to the tried-and-true method of healthy competition between departments or department heads. Depending on your corporate culture, competition can be a source of pride and lead to positive business outcomes.
- **Consider it training and skill development:** Middle management is responsible for the professional development of their employees but are often provided limited resources. If your company offers social impact programs like skills-based volunteering that align with the products and services you provide, or talent pipeline needed to succeed, promote participating in these programs as a cost-effective way to train and build skills. It’s a win-win-win because it’s valuable to the business, to the communities where your company operates and to employees as professional growth.



### KEEP IN MIND

Often the employees who fill these diverse roles have a unique set of skills that aren’t just valued by the business but needed by nonprofit partners to build capacity or deliver services. Share these critical community needs with middle managers so they can better understand the impact employees can have on social issues.

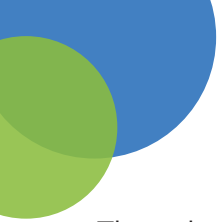
## Activate local leaders

Due to the rise of hybrid work, businesses are increasingly seeing the need to more intentionally connect employees to one another and reinforce the company’s purpose, culture and commitments. This has always been true of a work environment with frontline, remote and non-wired staff. **The most effective way to plug staff into your company’s social impact strategy and goals remains creating an employee champion network or council structure that helps scale, manage and drive engagement in the company’s social impact strategy.**



Check out our [whitepaper on the benefits and best practices](#) associated with these models.





These local leaders better understand the functional areas they represent and more easily cascade information to their peers. Consider identifying and empowering employees who are enthusiastic about social impact to act as ambassadors or champions. They can motivate their peers and help organize activities.

- **Foster connections:** While companies may call them by different names, local champions can help lead and communicate social impact throughout your company's footprint. In Altria's case, they use the term "act ambassadors," which stands for "Altria Contributing Together." These employees volunteer and represent a range of functional areas and employee resource groups and help plan and develop community engagement activities. More importantly, they help grow inclusion, create local connections, rally their colleagues, and offer new perspectives as the voice of employees.
- **Instill empowerment and autonomy:** Even if you don't have a formal people-powered infrastructure that scales across your company's footprint, you can still give frontline and non-wired employees the autonomy to design and lead their own social impact projects. This empowers them to take ownership and be more engaged in the process, which leads to less friction with business processes. Provide them with the tools, resources and training they need to be able to develop a community project or giving initiative that allows for creativity but also follows the company's philanthropic priorities.

### ***Meet employees where they are***

One of the first ways to ensure all employees feel invited to participate is to offer a variety of activities that might appeal to them based on different interests, skill sets and ability to step away from their tasks. This allows employees to choose activities that fit their schedules and preferences. Think of it as a spectrum of opportunities that runs the gamut from minimal effort to maximum rewards.

- **Count actions big and small:** Beyond donating time and money, think of all the ways an individual can make a difference in their community and integrate each into your strategy. Points of Light has developed the [Civic Circle® framework](#) that helps individuals understand that doing good comes in many forms. Companies like CarMax and Starbucks have embraced this model and are integrating and adapting it to fit within their employee community engagement strategy. The [Starbucks Community Champion](#) model allows every partner (employee) to proactively engage in community related activities through six meaningful actions: advocate, celebrate, give, learn, serve and uplift. This framework recognizes that everyone has their own lived experiences that inform how and why they show up to support those around them. Your company might have already embraced the notion of "acts of kindness" that employees perform without aligning with a nonprofit organization and these other acts can readily be integrated into your strategy.

- Create on-site opportunities:** When workers can't step away from the proverbial office for long, developing an opportunity to take place at your company's facilities is a convenient way to connect their skills and time to the community. It also removes transportation and commute time barriers and minimizes disruption to personal obligations. A best practice employed by companies like AbbVie, Dow, Amazon, and UPS involves on-site activities that can be set up in high-traffic areas like the break room or cafeteria, even in the lobby or parking lot. Activity options include kit packing or care package assembly, letter writing, donation drives and even participating in a fitness walk that supports a cause. Taking it a step farther, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, through their Green@Blue program, has developed and maintained community gardens on two of their campuses which provides both an on-site volunteer activity and access to fresh produce for both employees and community members. Kit packing at plants can be connected to larger company-wide efforts that help drive connection and the belief that every employee is important to the process of making positive change happen. For example, for manufacturing companies with an emphasis on STEM and workforce development, invite plant employees to build an equipment kit that can be "checked out" by colleagues who are trained to provide science lessons to students. Get creative! Fiserv brought BIPOC-owned small businesses into their offices to host "pop-up" marketplaces to provide an easy way for all employees to support social entrepreneurs and those whose profits make a difference. When developing your on-site projects, create moments to connect employees to the cause or community you're supporting by inviting nonprofit representatives to participate, share their mission and accomplishments so that employees have a deeper understanding of why their efforts matter.
- Integrate micro-actions:** Since many of these employees have fixed schedules, a smart way to ensure they feel like they can contribute is to lower time commitments and offer ways to engage that take just a few minutes. For example, prior to hosting a volunteer project, CarMax employees are invited to vote on the cause that the project will benefit. It takes less than 30 seconds and employees can also enter into a lottery to attend the project should their schedules permit. This opportunity creates buy-in for the upcoming project and reinforces CarMax's commitment to community. One more small but mighty action that CarMax enables for its employees is to provide virtual "Care Cards," which empowers every employee to direct \$50 from The CarMax Foundation to the nonprofit of their choice, thus removing a potential financial barrier. There are several ways to integrate crowdsourcing and microvolunteering into your strategy, which can engage just about every interested employee across your company's footprint—just be sure it's accessible from any device (including personal devices) if you have employees without company-issued equipment.



## KEEP IN MIND

Kit packing and assembly projects are often supply intense so make certain you're planning for them within your annual budget. Be sure to determine the community need and where goods will be stored and donated long before they are collected or packed.





- **Be location-agnostic:** The COVID-19 pandemic gave a massive boost to virtual volunteering and companies continue to see these opportunities as a way to get more employees involved. Companies can work with their nonprofit partners to create traditional and skills-based volunteer opportunities that happen fully online or in part. According to the [2022 CECF Giving in Numbers report](#), 83% of companies have a virtual volunteering program. Opportunities to mentor, review resumes, read to elementary students or call isolated seniors can all happen online but employees need to be provided the time to do it during the workday or encouraged to do it on personal time. You could also consider “take home” projects which include the shipping of supplies to an employee’s home where they can also engage family members in completing a project and then donating it to a local nonprofit or bringing it back to their closest office for distribution.
- **Think zip codes:** If faced with a large population of geographically-dispersed employees but a real interest in getting the workforce together, consider planning in-person volunteer projects to take place in certain markets where you have a high concentration of employees regardless of their function or team affiliation. Liberty Mutual is piloting this now to encourage colleagues who live in the same zip codes to volunteer together, build deeper connections, and share in the company’s commitment to caring.
- **Learn and grow:** While actions will move change forward, listening and learning are the key to getting started. Deep understanding of a community issue can come from opportunities to listen and learn whether during the workday (e.g., during team or all-staff meetings) or during their personal time. Providing employees who aren’t able to step away from their work with the simple opportunity to learn about their community and its challenges can spark civic action—now or in the future. Many companies now host webinars ahead of virtual and in-person volunteer projects or share educational videos so that, in a short amount of time, employees can better understand an issue, its root causes and how they can get involved when it’s convenient for them. AT&T went one step further and developed a list of topic-related content for employees to consume on their personal time or during work breaks as part of a 21-day racial equity challenge. As part of Dow’s North American workplace giving campaigns, energy is put into how to bring insights, education and connection to the control rooms to engage shift workers at manufacturing sites.
- **Integrate into daily work:** Align social impact activities with the core tasks and responsibilities of frontline and non-wired employees, treating it as part of rather than separate from their work. This connection can make the activities feel more meaningful and relevant to their roles. A whole host of companies involved in logistics and transportation, including UPS, have embraced this concept and developed partnerships

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with [Truckers Against Trafficking](#), an organization that seeks to interrupt trafficking networks by mobilizing an army of transportation professionals to assist law enforcement in preventing, recognizing and reporting this crime. And it's not just the transportation sector. Hospitality companies like Marriott International and Caesar's Entertainment are partnering with other organizations to actively train frontline staff members to help prevent trafficking by recognizing victims and perpetrators at their properties. As part of Starbucks Community Champion framework mentioned earlier, the 'uplift' component embeds sustainability practices and goodness into a partner's day-to-day tasks like packaging up unsold food at the end of the night for donation through Starbucks FoodShare program or small gestures like offering customers a reusable cup if they notice they'll be enjoying their coffee in the café. The Allstate Insurance Company has also integrated social impact into the daily tasks of their National Catastrophe Team (NCT), which is currently 1,100 employees strong. These skilled employees are deployed to large-scale natural disasters and spend long days in the field helping impacted community members through their claims process. Many NCT employees have also been trained to identify signs of domestic violence, one of The Allstate Foundation's focus areas, and a heightened concern when communities are dealing with high-stress circumstances. There's even a movement to help infuse social impact into workers' daily tasks, which is referred to as job purposing. Bea Boccalandro, an expert and avid speaker on corporate citizenship, has written a book on this concept, [Do Good at Work: How Simple Acts of Social Purpose Drive Success and Wellbeing](#), that details how any job and its related tasks can be adjusted to create a meaningful contribution to society.

- **Lift time constraints:** Acknowledge the busy schedules of frontline and non-wired employees and offer flexible participation options. Consider providing opportunities during work hours or break times or offering asynchronous activities they can complete in their own time. Your company may have scores of staff who work overnight shifts so be intentional when planning start times for projects. And, if volunteering truly means "off the clock" at your company and you've planned many Saturday projects, reduce the barrier to participation by offering childcare or by developing tasks that can be accomplished by caregiver and child.




### **KEEP IN MIND**

Your employee volunteers represent the community that you're seeking to support, and some may take advantage of the services your nonprofit partners provide. Be thoughtful and inclusive when writing project descriptions and communicating about the nonprofit mission and stakeholders because language matters. Offer moments to reflect before and after a project takes place to create a safe space for conversation among employees.

### **Tailor communications to fit the needs**

Since communication barriers are a top reason some employees can be more difficult to reach, it's imperative that you choose communication methods well-suited to their roles and work settings. Partner with your internal or employee



communication team to stay up to date on the channels you have available and any data that supports which ones work best to reach employee populations you're seeking to engage.

- **Follow the rule of seven:** There's an old marketing rule that says it takes seven times before your message provokes a customer to act. While it's not based on science, it is true that it often takes overcommunicating and changing up your formats, timing and distribution channels to ensure your message gets across to your frontline and non-wired audience. During the work day, they are focused on achieving work-related goals, are regularly bombarded with operational information and may not have regular access to your company's online communication methods. Don't rely on a singular communication to get through to them.
- **Go back to basics:** Though it may seem like technology rules, that might not be true for employees who aren't in front of computers or don't have access to company-issued devices. Consider options like posters in the breakroom, restrooms or elevator banks, window clings in the cafeteria, postcards or flyers sent to home addresses, broadcast messages on monitors throughout the facility, or even paycheck stubs. Post sign-up

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to employees.

- sheets in the breakroom or set up a table in the cafeteria to capture interest at mealtime. Of course, word of mouth is often the best way to communicate a message, so equip senior leaders and middle managers with key messaging that they can deliver during company-wide or department meetings, or team huddles that begin each shift.
- **Technology can be helpful:** There are certain times when utilizing technology can be supportive in reaching these groups of employees, such as including QR codes on breakroom posters or tent cards, computer kiosks with access to your social impact intranet page, a dedicated Teams or Slack channel on social impact, a website that's accessible without single sign-on, or a smartphone app that allows employees to access your giving and volunteering platform from a personal device. Remember that it does take time to build traction with technology so ensure you have a plan in place to continually promote its availability, even offering incentives to check it out frequently.
- **Learn from others:** Your HR team likely has to communicate very important information to all employees regularly. Check in with them often to see what's working. You might decide that it's worth it to collaborate on communicating information and share the costs associated.
- **Communicate clearly:** Because you might not have their attention for longer than a few minutes, as often as appropriate, communicate the purpose and benefits of every social impact activity clearly. Explain how participation ties into the organization's values and

mission, how it can positively impact the community and the employees themselves and why ALL employees—no matter their function, role or exemption status—are not just welcome but play a critical role in achieving the change the company wants to create.

### ***Ask for and listen to feedback regularly***

As important as it is to involve middle managers when planning how you might engage their teams, it's just as important to talk to these employee populations themselves. Seeking their input on the types of activities they'd like to engage in and the barriers they face and making them part of the decision-making process can increase their sense of ownership. Establish a feedback loop to gather input from frontline employees after each activity. Because confidentiality might help increase response rates, consider involving a third party or even a different department to administer surveys or conduct focus groups. Use their feedback to improve future initiatives and ensure their needs are met. Continuous monitoring of barriers and challenges can help you adapt your activities, practices and programs to better fit the needs of all.



### **KEEP IN MIND**

After asking for feedback, tell employees what you heard and then demonstrate that their contributions are valuable by acting on it. These two steps are key to building trust.

## **CONCLUSION**

Picture the remote workers, the road warriors, the delivery magicians, the retail superheroes, the makers and movers of goods and the voices behind the call center—they're all part of the workforce that, because of scheduling, communication and logistics, might have roadblocks to participating in your company's social impact activities. Then, picture the community change that's possible when your company's corporate citizenship strategy is thoughtfully and intentionally planned to ensure equitable access for all employees. While it takes effort, time and resources, small wins can evolve into sizable benefits for the company, the community and for frontline and non-wired employees themselves.

To get expert support in understanding the unique needs of your frontline and non-wired colleagues, developing an intentional strategy for community engagement and implementing that strategy, partner with [Points of Light](#).







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OF LIGHT**

#### **ABOUT THIS BRIEF**

The findings in this brief are drawn from a series of conversations and peer-led idea exchanges held in 2023, featuring Points of Light's Corporate Solutions staff, CSR leaders from Points of Light's Corporate Service Council member companies and corporate citizenship practitioners in the field. We are grateful to everyone who joined these conversations and especially to those who generously shared their insights and input, including Ramona Dragomir, AbbVie; Megan Bultman, The Allstate Foundation; Kristen Kaplan, CarMax; Justin Land, Dow, Inc.; Gary Levante, Berkshire Bank; May Nivar, Altria; Melissa Robinson, Amazon; Cathy Scott, The UPS Foundation; Sylvia Stevens-Edouard, Liberty Mutual Insurance, and Megan Zamora, Starbucks.

For additional resources on employee community engagement, please visit: [pointsoflight.org/social-impact-resources-for-businesses/](https://pointsoflight.org/social-impact-resources-for-businesses/).

#### **ABOUT POINTS OF LIGHT'S CORPORATE SERVICE COUNCIL**

The Corporate Service Council is an annual membership that empowers and equips CSR and corporate citizenship leaders with actionable resources, benchmarking data, in-person and online learning opportunities and access to a network of industry experts to spark innovation and achieve business and social outcomes.

To become part of the Corporate Service Council, visit: [pointsoflight.org/csc](https://pointsoflight.org/csc) or contact [support@pointsoflight.org](mailto:support@pointsoflight.org).

#### **ABOUT POINTS OF LIGHT**

Points of Light is a nonpartisan, global nonprofit organization that inspires, equips and mobilizes millions of people to take action that changes the world. We envision a world in which every individual discovers the power to make a difference, creating healthy communities in vibrant, participatory societies. Through 145 affiliates across 39 countries, and in partnership with thousands of nonprofits and corporations. Points of Light engages 3.7 million people in 16.7 million hours of service each year. We believe that companies can be drivers of transformative social change in communities around the world and that this potential is fully realized when employees are inspired and engaged as part of the strategy. Points of Light supports companies committed to driving positive social change through a variety of ways, including:

- The Corporate Service Council.
- Social impact consulting and advisory services.
- Program design and management for corporate employee volunteer and civic engagement programs.
- The Civic 50 national and regional recognition program.

LEARN MORE AT [POINTSOFLIGHT.ORG](https://pointsoflight.org).