

## WHAT IS CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING?

Corporate Social Responsibility (**CSR**) is a commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources.<sup>1</sup> There are two aspects of community involvement in which employees are actively and purposely involved: corporate volunteering and corporate philanthropy.

**We define Corporate volunteering as employer-organized opportunities for employees to support a charitable cause or otherwise make a positive impact with their contribution of time.**

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**We believe that successful employee volunteer programs (EVP's) are based on the intersection of company priorities, employees' interests and community needs.**

Community involvement is the power to bring positive, measurable change to both the communities in which you operate and to your business. Community involvement examples include in-kind and financial donations, employee volunteer days, enduring nonprofit partnerships, and more.

The business case for corporate community involvement has never been stronger.

In fact, the benefits of corporate community involvement are two-fold, providing positive returns to local charitable organizations and neighborhoods and boosting company performance indicators, such as reputation and employee engagement. As a company builds partnerships and working relationships with local community nonprofits and service-based organizations, neighborhoods are strengthened.

Corporate volunteering is an important vehicle for delivering care and compassion to causes and communities in need. Over 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies run employee volunteering programs, formally sponsoring and subsidizing employees' efforts to perform community service and outreach activities on company time.<sup>3</sup>

Corporate community involvement programs can provide a company with a platform for showcasing products, employee competencies, and a firm's values. There are even ways to promote networking and skill-building among employees while you are strengthening your community. Companies that use corporate citizenship to strengthen community partnerships are not only able to foster a workplace culture deepens employee commitment, but are also able to build enduring relationships in the communities within which they do business, a quality that benefits both.

A **megatrend** is the belief that corporations are a key part in addressing needs in our changing world. IMPACT2030 was founded in response to UN Resolution A/RES/66/67, which called on the United Nations to further engage with the private sector "through the expansion of corporate volunteering and employee volunteer activities."

IMPACT2030 is facilitating avenues for cross-sector and cross-industry collaboration; initiating joint commitments on human capital investments for the SDGs at a local level, national and country level.

Anchored by Sustainable Development Goals No. 17, Partnerships for the Goals, IMPACT2030 has the unique mission to activate human capital investments globally through pro-bono, skills-based and direct employee volunteer programs to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. IMPACT2030 is growing with millions of employees collectively acting as multipliers.

"At IMPACT2030 we believe that if we can unlock and activate the passion and skills of the world's extensive base of employees we can significantly increase our collective impact on the Sustainable Development Goals." Peter Bodin, Chairman of the Board of Directors, IMPACT2030 and Global CEO, Grant Thornton International Ltd.



## Sense of wellbeing, happiness :

*"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself." Ralph Waldo Emerson*



# HAPPY EMPLOYEES DOING EXTRAORDINARY THINGS

## The Helper's High & Giver's Glow

Over the past few decades, scientists have studied the health benefits of pro-social behavior, often referred to as "helper's high." Those who volunteer have lower rates of depression, lower mortality rates, higher self-esteem, and greater functional ability than those who do not volunteer.<sup>5</sup>

Generosity and compassion have been a focal point of research for decades, and studies have consistently shown that improved mood, better physical health and increased longevity are connected to giving – whether it's monetary donations or volunteer hours invested on the weekend. When it comes to your health, it truly is better to give than to receive.

<sup>1</sup>Lonneke Roza, Erasmus University Rotterdam (2016). *Employee engagement in corporate social responsibility*. Page 1.

<sup>2</sup>BCCCP Boston College, Center for Corporate Citizenship Research & News 15-3-2019 retrieved from: <https://ccc.bc.edu/content/ccc/research/corporate-citizenship-news-and-topics/corporate-community-involvement.html>

<sup>3</sup>US News, Elizabeth Renter 15-3-2019 retrieved from <https://health.usnews.com/health-news/health-wellness/articles/2015/05/01/what-generosity-does-to-your-brain-and-life-expectancy>

<sup>4</sup>VolunteerMatch & United Healthcare (2017), *Doing good is good for you*. Study retrieved from [https://newsroom.uhc.com/content/dam/newsroom/2017\\_VolunteerStudy\\_Summary\\_Web.pdf](https://newsroom.uhc.com/content/dam/newsroom/2017_VolunteerStudy_Summary_Web.pdf)

<sup>5</sup>Realized Worth 15-3-2019, retrieved from <https://www.realizedworth.com/2018/04/12/proofs-and-research-volunteering-benefits-individuals-and-companies/>

## Generosity and Your Brain

The feel-good effects of giving begin in the brain. It's called "giver's glow," says Stephen G. Post, director of the Center for Medical Humanities, Compassionate Care and Bioethics at New York's Stony Brook University. The response, he says, is triggered by brain chemistry in the mesolimbic pathway, which recognizes rewarding stimuli.

Philanthropy "doles out several different happiness chemicals," Post says, "including dopamine, endorphins that give people a sense of euphoria and oxytocin, which is associated with tranquility, serenity or inner peace."

This pleasure and reward system evolved some 1 to 2 billion years ago, and at its most basic level, is tied to the joy we receive from eating, sex and social interactions.<sup>6</sup>

A 2017 study by United Healthcare and Volunteer Match<sup>7</sup> confirmed many findings that demonstrate the **mental, emotional and physical benefits** of volunteering. The study found that, of respondents that volunteered in the last 12 months:

**75% felt healthier,  
93% felt it improved their moods, and  
79% reported lowered stress levels.**

Volunteers believe they are more calm and peaceful and have more energy to a greater extent than those who have not volunteered in the past year.



<sup>6</sup>US News, Elizabeth Renter 15-3-2019 retrieved from <https://health.usnews.com/health-news/health-wellness/articles/2015/05/01/what-generosity-does-to-your-brain-and-life-expectancy>

<sup>7</sup>VolunteerMatch & United Healthcare (2017), *Doing good is good for you*. Study retrieved from [https://newsroom.uhc.com/content/dam/newsroom/2017\\_VolunteerStudy\\_Summary\\_Web.pdf](https://newsroom.uhc.com/content/dam/newsroom/2017_VolunteerStudy_Summary_Web.pdf)

## Volunteering brings fun and fulfillment to your life<sup>9</sup>

Volunteering is a fun and easy way to explore your interests and passions. Doing volunteer work you find meaningful and interesting can be a relaxing, energizing escape from your day-to-day routine of work, school, or family commitments. Volunteering also provides you with renewed creativity, motivation, and vision that can carry over into your personal and professional life.

### Quote Philips Volunteer Eindhoven

*"Volunteering felt like meditation<sup>8</sup>. It was nice because I felt like I had a direct impact on improving others' lives as well as my own health and wellbeing because I spent an entire day working in the garden for the foodbank, doing physical work, like an exercise, getting fresh and clean air, in the nature, and being calm..."*

*We do not get this opportunity since we are stuck in the office for extended hours under stress and even not able to go out to have lunch. I wish more employers could participate this activity, it felt like a meditation!*

Many people volunteer in order to make time for hobbies outside of work as well. For instance, if you have a desk job and long to spend time outdoors, you might consider volunteering to help plant a community garden, walk dogs for an animal shelter, or help out at a children's camp.



## Leverage a Transformative Volunteering approach to maximize employee health benefits<sup>10</sup>

A study from the University of Exeter found that although it is perceived that people tend to volunteer for altruistic reasons, if they do not feel they are getting something in return, then the positive health outcomes on volunteers are limited.

A Transformative Volunteering approach puts employees at the center of EVPs to ensure its benefits, such as health outcomes, are realized. Of course, the basic benefits of EVPs such as increased physical activity or the introduction to a social network will stand true for most EVPs.

However, there are elements of Transformative Volunteering that will allow volunteers to realize some of the more significant health benefits. For example, tactics used in Transformative Volunteering, such as including a disorienting dilemma during the brief and self-reflection in the debrief, provides the opportunity for volunteers to identify with a stronger sense of purpose. As the research shows, this is linked to higher levels of happiness and help fight depression.

Further, meeting volunteers at their highest level of contribution, whether that be as a Tourist, Traveler or Guide, will allow volunteers to continue developing skills that may translate to their workplace and aid in career advancement.

These are just a few examples of how Transformative Volunteering can strengthen the significant health benefits associated with traditional volunteering according to Chris Jarvis, co-founder and executive director of RW institute.

### **CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING CHANGES EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR TOWARD THEIR COMPANY IN A SIGNIFICANT WAY:**

-- ● **+20%**

**EMPLOYEES WHO  
PARTICIPATED IN GROUP  
CORPORATE VOLUNTEER  
EVENTS EXPERIENCED A 20%  
INCREASE IN EMPLOYEE  
ENGAGEMENT RELATIVE  
TO THE CONTROL GROUP**



<sup>8</sup>Source: SurveyMonkey results of Samen voor Eindhoven , 2018, Philips Volunteer feedback

<sup>9</sup>Helpguide, 15-3-2019 retrieved from: <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/volunteering-and-its-surprising-benefits.htm>

<sup>10</sup>Health Benefits of volunteering for the employee volunteer, 15-3-2019 retrieved from:

<https://www.realizedworth.com/2018/09/14/health-benefits-of-volunteering-for-the-employee-volunteer/>



***'Be the change you wish to see in the world'  
(Gandhi)***



**Esther Hofstede**, founder and director of Samen voor Eindhoven.

Since 2003 Esther is an experienced senior consultant and speaker on Corporate Community Involvement and designing and implementing Employee Volunteer Programs. In her work with companies like DLL, ASML, Philips, NXP, Rabobank she delivers programs that combine business and social value. Esther is number 14 in the FRITS TOP 50 of most influential women in the Brainport region.

During her sabbatical she did a one month field research in San Francisco. She also works together with her colleagues in Lithuania, Spain and Ukraine in a three year program from the EU Erasmus+. You can find this research & toolkit about corporate volunteering and the positive impact on youth, communities, companies and employees [here](#).

She helps to mobilize thousands of employees to make meaningful contributions in the communities where they live and work. Esther believes that by engaging the employees in 'the right way' we create transformative social change for a better world.

More info on [www.samenvooreindhoven.nl](http://www.samenvooreindhoven.nl)