



# Employee Volunteer Programs

## Everything You Need to Know

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## What is an Employee Volunteer Program?

An Employee Volunteer Program (EVP) is [defined by Points of Light](#) as a “planned, managed effort that seeks to motivate and enable employees to effectively serve community needs through the leadership of the employer.”

### What You'll Learn In This Guide

- How to start an employee volunteer program
- The corporate volunteering benefits to your business
- How to encourage volunteerism within your workforce

Employee volunteer programs can also be called workplace volunteer programs, corporate volunteer programs, company volunteer programs, and other iterations. These programs are typically built to support a company's larger corporate social responsibility program or community engagement program. Companies may have specific reasoning for building employee volunteer programs like building a positive brand reputation or increasing employee engagement.

### The Definition of Employee Volunteer Program

“A planned, managed effort that seeks to motivate and enable employees to effectively serve community needs through the leadership of the employer.” - Points of Light

## Why are Employee Volunteer Programs Important?

Employee volunteer programs are becoming increasingly important as the demand for businesses to give back to their communities grows. In addition, employers have the resources to make a larger impact than individual volunteers because of the sheer number of employees they can deploy to causes. Not only are employee volunteer programs great for our communities, but they are in company's best interest when the following advantages are considered:

- Improves corporate brand image on local, national and international levels
- Supports external relations with key stakeholders
- Provides employees with team building opportunities, thus increasing company loyalty and employee morale
- Provides employees with an outlet to get out of the office and break up their work schedule, thus increasing employee engagement and employee productivity
- Attractive to Millennial job seekers
- Places the company as a positive role model in the community

## Corporate Volunteering Statistics

If you're still not convinced employee volunteer programs matter, here are a few corporate volunteering statistics that prove how valuable they are:

- 79% of people prefer to work with a socially responsible company. ([Charities.org](#))
- 88% of HR executives believe volunteering has a positive impact on an organization's reputation. ([Deloitte](#))
- [Corporate volunteer programs](#) have been shown to reduce employee turnover by as much as 50% and increase productivity by at least 13%.
- 61% of Millennials want to work for a company that offers volunteering opportunities.
- 86% of employees would consider leaving their current job to work for one with an excellent corporate reputation.

## How to Start a Volunteer Program

[Starting a volunteer program](#) can make even the most experienced HR professional overwhelmed. Having a step by step plan is recommended so that every consideration is taken into account. You'll want to make sure you've identified the right employees to target, you'll want to make sure the program fits the needs of your organization and employees. Setting goals, getting executive approval, delivering the news to your team and then finally kicking off the program... phew! It's a lot of work. There's so much that goes into starting a volunteer program, but we've laid out the entire process in 10 steps:

### Steps for starting a volunteer program:

1. Define your focus to align with employee and company values.
2. Tailor the program to fit your company's specific and unique needs.
3. Create achievable and granular goals to ensure you can both reach and measure them.
4. Put together a pitch to get leadership buy-in and budget access.
5. Get support from company leadership to kick off employee participation.
6. Prepare for objectors.
7. Create a meaningful experience by surveying employees on their expectations and needs.
8. Communicate to employees via email, meetings, social media and company intranet.
9. Integrate volunteerism into your culture.
10. Set quarterly milestones to adjust, tweak, check measurements and connect with stakeholders.

## Volunteer Program Development Best Practices

Corporate volunteer programs are a recruiting tool, a skills development pathway and an employee engagement and branding opportunity that can be built into your business objectives. Take a look at these volunteer program development best practices to make sure you get it right:

**Make it attractive to all employees:** The evidence is overwhelming that employees want to give when given the opportunity. So create opportunities for them. From skills development pro bono programs to teamwork focused outings, there can be programs for everyone to participate in, no matter their fitness or skill level.

**Communicate across multiple channels:** People can't join if they don't know about your program. While email alerts, SMS text or internal groups as well as traditional means like flyers and company meetings are great to spread the word, there's nothing like a complete organization management system to coordinate your employees' philanthropic goals.

**Provide alternatives to the main focus:** Sometimes dates and times don't work out for everyone else or people would rather give monetary gifts. Give them options to contribute even if they can't be physically there or find the time in their schedule to volunteer.

**Make it mobile:** Today's workforce needs options that are available on the go. If your program is hidden behind an impenetrable firewall or buried in the company intranet, it may be extremely hard to gain company-wide traction. Offer opportunities that employees can access anytime, anywhere.

## Corporate Volunteering Benefits

Corporate volunteering benefits employees and employers in so many ways! In fact, studies show that employee volunteering contributes to a happier, healthier and more engaged workforce. Take a look at this complimentary bonus download to see the 10 Most Powerful Benefits to Employee Volunteering.

[Free Bonus Download](#)

## How to Encourage Volunteerism

Encouraging volunteerism in your company can be done through incentives like paid time off, but did you know there are other ways to encourage employees to volunteer? In our article, [4 Quick and Easy Ways to Increase Employee Volunteering](#), we share a few ideas that may be helpful to your company as well:

**#1 - Incentivize Volunteers with Gift Cards** - [Learn what you shouldn't forget](#) to do if you choose this option!

**#2 - Treat Employees Volunteers to Lunch** - No chains, please! Opt for a locally-owned restaurant to support your local community.

[Get the rest of the ideas here!](#)

## Did You Know?

- 67% of managers were more likely to volunteer if their co-workers participated.
- 77% of managers are more likely to volunteer if they are able to use their specific skill set.
- 77% of the millennial workforce would prefer to volunteer with their coworkers.

## Volunteer Incentive Program

From offering employees [paid time off to volunteer](#) or hosting company-wide volunteer events, there's so much you can do to create a volunteer incentive program. No matter the size of your organization, you can increase employee participation in volunteering by providing incentives. We can learn a thing or two about volunteer incentive programs from companies like Novo Nordisk, PCL Construction, and Cadence. In fact, take a look at this article to get ideas for your very own [volunteer incentive program](#)!

### Here's a few simple tips we've pulled from these leading companies:

- Novo Nordisk's (@novonordisk) "Changing Our Communities" program is genius. It was launched in 2015 to track and help employees find volunteer opportunities. Employees may submit projects they want to work on, and Novo Nordisk will make a monetary donation to the organization in honor of the employee or department.
- **Make this work for your company:** Can't afford to donate to every organization your employees submit? Here's a budget-friendly solution; host a company-wide contest that invites anyone to submit ideas for a company-wide volunteer day! Set a monetary amount for project submissions like \$5 or \$10 or more if you want (depending on the size of your company). Then, take all submissions and stack them against each other to get all of your employees to vote for the best one.

[Get more volunteer incentive program ideas!](#)

So what do you think? We're going to keep adding to this page until we've compiled the largest collection of employee volunteer program content out there! What do you want to see added?



## Employee Volunteer Program Articles

- <http://blog.cybergrants.com/corporate-volunteer-programs-a-primer-for-companies-interested-in-philanthropy-201511.html>
- <http://blog.cybergrants.com/statistics-every-employer-with-philanthropic-goals-should-know-201511.html>
- <http://blog.cybergrants.com/employee-volunteering-programs-201511.html>
- <http://blog.cybergrants.com/how-to-increase-employee-participation-in-volunteer-programs-201601.html>
- <http://blog.cybergrants.com/workplace-volunteering-201602.html>
- <http://blog.cybergrants.com/increase-employee-volunteering-201602.html>
- <http://blog.cybergrants.com/celebrate-national-volunteer-week-201604.html>
- <http://cybergrants.com/blog/7-employee-volunteer-program-benefits-you-cant-ignore-201606.html>
- <http://www.cybergrants.com/blog/7-research-backed-benefits-of-providing-volunteering-programs-video-201608.html>
- <http://www.cybergrants.com/blog/things-you-didnt-know-about-employee-volunteering-201709.html>
- <http://blog.cybergrants.com/steps-starting-employee-volunteer-program>