



Developing Excellence in Workplace Volunteer Programs: Guidelines for Success



Hands On
NETWORK

Excerpt Edition - Chapters 1 & 2

Acknowledgement

The Points of Light Institute gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the business and nonprofit leaders who dedicated their time in reviewing and providing information to this publication. They have vast years of experience, insight, and leadership developing and directing award-winning volunteer programs.

Their contribution of knowledge, experience, and expertise helped make this publication the most comprehensive, up-to-date resource on workplace volunteering. Without their guidance, this publication would not have been possible.

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The Points of Light Institute, is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to engaging people and resources to help solve serious social problems through volunteering. Corporate Volunteer Development helps businesses develop and manage effective employee volunteer programs that meet company priorities, address employee interests and target real community needs. For more information about employee volunteer programs or Corporate Volunteer Development, CVCinfo@HandsOnNetwork.org.

ISBN 1-58534-049-9

Printed with the generous support of KPMG LLP

Developing Excellence in Workplace Volunteer Programs: Guidelines for Success

**A publication of the Points of Light Foundation
& Volunteer Center National Network**

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Excerpt Edition
Chapters 1 & 2



FOREWARD

Volunteering is on the rise. And businesses play an integral role in contributing to this trend. Companies today are moving beyond the norm of cash-only contributions to innovative solutions to engage their employees to give back and serve in their communities. Workplace volunteering is one of the many strategies businesses are utilizing to think outside the paradigm of community relations and involvement.

Today's business environment demands a heightened sense of ethics, accountability, and social responsibility. Companies also have to do more with less. But, to maintain a competitive advantage, businesses cannot afford to be disconnected from their communities, customers, clients, or employees. More and more Americans are increasing their expectations of companies to do more than just make a profit, and many are willing to hold businesses accountable for not doing so.

Workplaces — businesses small and large, health care providers, non-profit organizations, universities, municipal governments, etc. — can and are connecting with their communities to provide real solutions. Businesses of today's generation have a much better understanding of the value of integrating community service into their business plans. They have learned the importance of their relationship to the communities in which they do business. Ultimately, these companies know that they cannot expect to be successful doing business in an unhealthy community; and it's their responsibility to do something positive to make a difference.

One vehicle providing companies a platform to invest in their communities beyond dollars and cents, is operating a workplace volunteer program. This publication *Developing Excellence in Workplace Volunteer Programs: Guidelines for Success* is an indispensable tool for companies interested in developing a strategy to encourage and provide opportunities for their employees to invest their time and talent in generating social change. Workplace volunteering connects employees with community organizations in a meaningful way and benefits the company, employees, and community.

The role of corporate social responsibility — especially employee volunteering — will continue to remain critical for businesses to achieve success and a competitive advantage. This publication arms businesses with the tools to continue the ever-increasing movement of good corporate citizenship through the integration of workplace volunteering into their efforts. It is our goal to engage more businesses in effective volunteer management to further demonstrate the significant impact a company can make in its communities. We believe cultivating a culture of service among employees allows for the development of truly outstanding business leaders.

We thank KPMG for their generous sponsorship in helping us to bring greater awareness of the employee volunteering field to companies and the importance that volunteering can bring to the business as a whole. We also thank the business and nonprofit professionals, companies, and Volunteer Centers who contributed to this publication and shared their expertise, knowledge, and effective practices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Goodwin". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Robert K. Goodwin
President and CEO
Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network

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This excerpt edition does not include all chapters. To order full publication with CD ROM, visit www.PointsofLight.org/Catalog

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PREFACE

"Serving the communities in which we live and work is a core value of KPMG. The giving spirit that is abundant within our firm is put into action through Involve, our national volunteer program. Involve brings those who are willing to serve together with the needs of our communities. Through our active participation, we strengthen our communities, and in turn make KPMG a better and stronger firm."

-Eugene O'Kelly, Chairman & CEO,
KPMG LLP

This excerpt edition contains the first two chapters of the *Developing Excellence in Workplace Volunteer Programs: Guidelines for Success* (2004) published by the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network. It provides a good start to understanding the business case for having a workplace volunteer program and provides useful questions to ask when starting such an effort.

The complete *Developing Excellence in Workplace Volunteer Programs: Guidelines for Success* is a 72-page publication with an attached CD Rom, containing many workplace volunteer resources and examples. It outlines the steps of program development, offers tips from experts in employee volunteer program management, and gives examples easily customize for businesses, along with other valuable resources. The full publication can be purchased through the Points of Light Foundation.

More and more businesses are finding that engaging their employees in workplace volunteering provides numerous benefits to the company, employees, and the community. Workplace volunteering can also help a company realize its community relations, human resources, and marketing goals.

With leading volunteer program managers and award-winning workplace volunteer programs to serve as your guide, learn the key elements essential to building a strong foundation for a workplace volunteer program. Review and benchmark your company's efforts against the time-tested Principles of Excellence for Workplace Volunteering — a proven framework to help companies achieve lasting program success.

We hope this excerpt edition is a catalyst in helping your company or organization engage your employees in community service efforts.

CHAPTER 1

All About Employee Volunteer Programs

What Is An EVP?

An employee volunteer program — or EVP — is a planned, managed effort that seeks to motivate and enable employees to effectively volunteer under the sponsorship and leadership of the employer. It is one strategy among many such as human resources, philanthropy, marketing, and public relations that a company can use to address issues that affect its ability (or license) to operate and to become an employer of choice.

Any size business can participate. Employees can volunteer individually, as a group, or as an entire company. Volunteer projects can be one time or ongoing throughout the year. Program activities can be as simple as a group of employees cleaning a park together, or as complex as a program that includes monetary donations, paid time off for volunteering, and volunteer work as management training. The key is to tailor workplace volunteering to your business needs and to integrate it into what you do on an ongoing basis.

Why Should Businesses Start an EVP?

What do UPS, KPMG, and Timberland all have in common? They are leading companies with multimillion-dollar revenues. And all of them practice corporate social responsibility — including volunteering.

As today's companies face increasing competition, the need to differentiate from others is critical to business success. For more than a decade, corporate social responsibility and corporate citizenship have continued to gain recognition as one way to make your business stand out from the competition. Companies are moving from cash-only charitable giving to more strategic and diversified contributions, including the time and talent of their employees. EVPs are a great way to build on your company's existing values, promote your business, foster the loyalty of your employees and serve the needs of your community.

We have found that most companies want much more from their volunteer programs than demonstrating their positions as good business neighbors. For example, in 2002, the Points of Light Foundation held focus groups of workplace volunteer leaders from across the country to articulate what many businesses want for the communities from their volunteer programs: *they want to make a difference.*

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EVP=EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

A planned, managed effort that seeks to motivate and enable employees to effectively volunteer under the sponsorship and leadership of the employer

Quick Facts:

Close to half of all adults over the age of 21 volunteered with a formal organization in some capacity on an average of 3.6 hours each week. This formal volunteer workforce represented the equivalent of over 9 million full-time employees at a value of \$239 billion.

Giving and Volunteering
in the United States,
Independent Sector, 2001

Specifically, companies want certain outcomes for communities from their EVPs. These outcomes include:

- Measurable success for the nonprofit organizations as they work toward their missions
- Measurable improvements in issues affecting communities
- Increased efficiencies, capacities and strengths for nonprofit organizations
- More community needs being met

Social responsibility and good corporate citizenship are now deciding factors in buying brands and choosing employers. Companies recognize that they must invest in their locales, strengthening their communities and, ultimately, their consumer base. As a result, consumers and employees will reward those companies with their loyalty and purchasing dollars. Corporate citizenship, including workplace volunteering, is a golden opportunity to ensure that a business' brand identity includes positive, community-friendly characteristics. Moreover, workplace volunteering provides an environment and vehicle in which employees — and the community — can feel a sense of pride. Businesses are no longer just a force for economic change; they are drivers of social change as well.

The most successful EVPs are based on the win/win/win model by:

- Supporting company priorities and values
- Basing activities on employees' interests
- Targeting real community needs

Workplace volunteering is investing in the future of your company, your employees, and your community.

Employee volunteer programs are a perfect showcase for leadership and demonstrating how your business and its employees respond to calls for service. From serving a meal at the homeless shelter to organizing an entire day of service for Make a Difference Day, there are thousands of opportunities to serve. This publication and the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network give you the framework for your EVP and some great ideas. It is up to you to act on them and begin to reap the many benefits of a workplace volunteer program.

USA Freedom Corps, through the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, established a volunteer service indicator in 2002 with baseline data as a national measurement of volunteer behavior. Data on volunteering was collected through a supplement to the September 2003 Current Population Survey. Some of the highlights from the 2003 data include:

- About 63.8 million people did volunteer work at some point from September 2002 to September 2003, up from 59.8 million for the similar period ended in September 2002. The volunteer rate grew to 28.8%, up from 27.4%.
- Overall, 31.2% of all employed persons had volunteered during the year ended in September 2003. Among the employed, part-time workers were more likely than full-time workers to have participated in volunteer activities.
- Women volunteered at a higher rate than did men, a relationship that held across age groups, education levels, and other major characteristics.
- Among those who had volunteered at some point in the past, the most common reason given for not volunteering in the year ended September 2003 was lack of time (44.7%), followed by health or medical problems (14.7%) and family responsibilities or childcare problems (9.5%).¹

Benefits of EVPs

Workplace volunteering benefits more than just your community. When strategically integrated within business operations, EVPs can offer a number of benefits to your business, your employees, and the community in which your business operates.

Employee Volunteer Programs Build Value for Companies

Employee volunteering provides a way to ...	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Agree
Implement corporate business goals	53%	34%	87%
Implement strategic community relations goals	61%	34%	95%
Create healthier communities	85%	15%	100%
Help employee morale	38%	56%	94%
Improve company's image	74%	26%	100%
Improve company's teamwork	53%	44%	97%

The Corporate Volunteer Program as a Strategic Resource, Points of Light Foundation, 2000

Companies understand more than ever the value of integrating community service into their business plans. The relationship of businesses to communities in which they do business should be a symbiotic connection where one cannot be successful without the other.

¹ USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Service Indicator

Benefits of EVPs

- Enhanced public image
- Means to support an organization's strategic business goals
- Provides human and capital resources to nonprofit organizations that may be helping employees and their families
- Develops future workforce contributing to a sustainable company
- Attracts better employees and increases retention
- Builds employee morale
- Addresses employee work/life issues
- Provides teamwork activities
- Increases employee/customer loyalty
- Allows leadership opportunities
- Enhances communication skills
- Provides employee/management training and skill building
- Strengthens relationships with clients/customers/vendors
- Assists in alleviating community social issues

Quick Facts:

- 75% of respondents believe corporate citizenship is driven largely by internal corporate values and 53% on customer feedback.
- 82% of the responding businesses believe good corporate citizenship helps the bottom line.
- 38% of respondents think that to a great or large extent corporate citizenship helps to recruit and retain employees.

2003 State of Corporate Citizenship report, The Center for Corporate Citizenship at Boston College and The Center for Corporate Citizenship at The U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Principles of Excellence for Workplace Volunteering

Excellent workplace volunteer programs provide a measurable benefit to the community, are employee-driven and bring added strategic value to the business.

To guide you in developing your EVP, look to the Principles of Excellence. The Principles of Excellence for Workplace Volunteering can be summed up in simply one word: **ACT!** When you ACT on behalf of your community, your business will also begin to see extraordinary benefits.

ACT stands for:

ACKNOWLEDGE that the workplace's employee volunteer efforts contribute to the achievement of its business goals.

COMMIT to establish, support and promote an employee volunteer program that encourages the involvement of every employee, and manage the employee volunteer program like any other business function.

TARGET workplace volunteering at serious social problems in the community.

By applying the Principles of Excellence as you design your workplace volunteer program, you will be able to take advantage of the advice and wisdom of businesses that have already seamlessly integrated workplace volunteering into their business culture. When you commit company resources and leadership to workplace volunteering on an ongoing basis, you ensure its success and long-term effect on both your business and your community.

On the following pages, there are guidelines under each ACT step that will help you use the Principles of Excellence to build a successful workplace volunteer program within your business.

In 1997, 75% of Americans surveyed said, all other things being equal, they would consider switching to a company involved with a good cause. In 2002, that number increased to 91%.

2002 Cone Corporate Citizenship Study

Principles of Excellence for Workplace Volunteering

ACKNOWLEDGE that the workplace's employee volunteer efforts contribute to the achievement of its business goals.

How this is achieved:

1. The company (organization) recognizes that societal and community issues have a direct relationship to the organization's future success. This relationship is expressed through:
 - Organizational identity statements such as mission, vision, values statements
 - Organization, business or department goals
2. Employee volunteering is a key component in the organization's overall community involvement efforts.
3. The organization communicates its corporate social vision consistently to its external and internal stakeholders through means such as an annual report, posting on web sites, newsletter articles, etc.
4. Senior management participates in leading the volunteer effort and takes an active, visible role in the community.
5. The employee volunteer program brings strategic benefits to the organization and contributes to its business goals.

COMMIT to establish, support, and promote an employee volunteer program that encourages the involvement of every employee, and manage the employee volunteer program like any other business function.

How this is achieved:

1. The employee volunteer program is designed with a work plan including goals, resources, a promotional plan and recognition strategies, evaluation, etc.
2. The employee volunteer program is employee-driven and has input from senior management and community members.
3. The employee volunteer program is supported with policies and practices that encourage optimum participation. Policies and practices may include release time, flex time, continuous improvement practices for volunteer events, participation goals, recognition, funds for expenses or monetary grants to nonprofit organizations where employees volunteer, etc.
4. The employee volunteer program is managed to bring value to the organization. Value can be gained through teambuilding, employee leadership development, family-included events, enhanced community relationships, strengthened business relationships, etc.
5. The employee volunteer program is evaluated to determine the outcomes that it brings to the company, employees, and the community.

TARGET workplace volunteering at serious social problems in the community.

How this is achieved:

1. The employee volunteer program has a focus on addressing serious social problems.
2. The organization develops employee volunteer partnerships with local businesses, nonprofits, Volunteer Centers, Corporate Volunteer Councils or grassroots agencies to leverage resources to meet serious, systemic social problems in the community. The result being that both the organization and the community view the employee volunteer program as a resource for the community.
3. The employee volunteer program engages in increasing its nonprofit partners' capacities of skills and resources to work toward their missions.

Looking to the Future

As global forces influence the American business environment and competition increases for employees, customers, and investors, EVPs are perfectly placed to help position companies favorably. Used effectively, EVPs can be used to further business priorities including public relations, marketing and communications, employee skill development, and more.

At the same time, there may be some challenges preventing businesses from realizing the benefits of EVPs. Limited personal time available for employees in today's on-demand business environment and also middle managers wanting to meet the bottom line, may be obstacles. However, EVPs offer creative solutions for employees to be engaged in the community.

For More Information

If you need more information to build a business case for an EVP — or just more information in general — consider joining the Points of Light Foundation as a business member. Among many other benefits, they can provide:

- Customized assistance from staff experts
- Opportunity to network with other businesses
- Access to various workplace volunteering resources on the business members only website
- Discounts on Points of Light Foundation books, training, volunteer recognition items, and consulting services
- Opportunities for national and local media exposure

Locally, the Volunteer Center and Corporate Volunteer Council can also provide many resources, including local volunteer opportunities that are appropriate for your business.

To connect with the local Volunteer Center in your community, call or visit 1-800-VOLUNTEER.org. To find out more about Corporate Volunteer Councils or locate one in your community, email CVCinfo@HandsOnNetwork.org.

CHAPTER 2

Four Steps for Getting Started

Getting Started

There are a variety of ways to structure an EVP and a wide-range of activities from single volunteer events to fully integrated, ongoing volunteer programs with rewards for service and distinct business goals. The most successful workplace volunteer programs reflect the Principles of Excellence for Workplace Volunteering that integrates the priorities of the company, the interests of the employees, and the needs of the community.

The program's foundation can be laid with four easy steps.

- Step One:** Identify business priorities that can be supported by an EVP.
- Step Two:** Identify employees' interests.
- Step Three:** Learn the most pressing community needs.
- Step Four:** Determine what these priorities, interests and needs have in common.

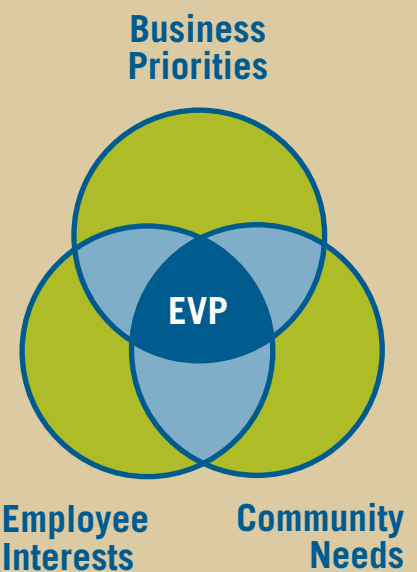
With this information, you can begin building your case for an EVP.

Step **1** Identify Business Priorities

Step 1 reflects the 1st Principle of Excellence for Workplace Volunteering: Acknowledge that the workplace's employee volunteer efforts contribute to the achievement of its business goals.

By acknowledging the importance of community involvement in a mission statement, a company clearly puts forth its priorities to both internal and external stakeholders. Making community involvement part of your company mission can also ensure the sustainability of your EVP — and the core business values it supports.

Keep in mind that EVPs can be used to address a multitude of core business functions, including employee recruitment, training and retention, marketing, communications, public relations, productivity, and regulatory and government affairs.



Points of Light Institute

Quick Facts:

- 81% of respondents to a 1999 Points of Light Foundation survey said that they use their EVP to support core business functions.

The Corporate Volunteer Program as a Strategic Resource, Points of Light Institute, 2000

WHAT'S WORKED: GETTING STARTED

- A chemical company identified the benefits the business would most want to receive from the EVP, then asked executives for information about the benefits that they would value most.
- An electric utility EVP manager analyzed the organization's annual report, taking into account its mission statement, priorities, and strategic business plan.
- An EVP manager at a professional services firm worked with other departments in the company to help them reach their department goals using the EVP.
- A utility company communicated that volunteering is the responsibility of each employee by providing all new hires with a volunteer handbook.
- At a law firm, brochures on the company's volunteer program are located in each office reception area.

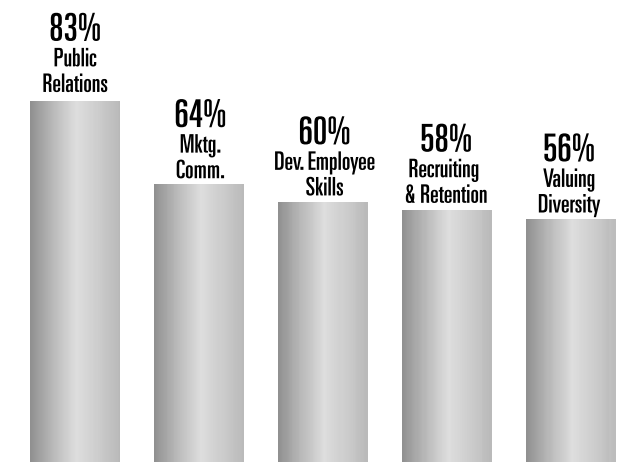
Here is a quick plan to identify your business priorities.

- **Check your organization's mission statement, vision statement, values statement, or social policy documents.**
Is the link between the business goals and the support of the community clearly articulated? In large organizations, you may also want to check your specific company or division statements for further information.
- **Conduct research to identify the organizational priorities that will be supported by the EVP.**
Obtain the current business plan, operating plan, annual report, etc. Meet with department heads and senior management on what are the most critical short and long-term issues facing the organization. Ask about their departmental strategies to address these issues. Listen for where the EVP may be able to bring them value.
- **Select the benefits your organization wants as added benefits from the EVP.**

Use the **What Are Our Business Priorities?** worksheet in the How-To Section at the end of this chapter to determine what your business priorities are.

Step 2 Identify Employees' Interests

Once you have identified the company's issues and priorities and any goals various departments want to achieve through employee volunteering, you are ready to gather information from the employees about their



Workplace Volunteering Statistics

The Corporate Volunteer Program as a Strategic Resource, Points of Light Foundation, 2000

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interests. By seeking their ideas and feedback, you will be able to develop a program around their interests—which helps ensure participation and your program’s success.

Here is a quick plan to identify employees’ interests.

- **Tell employees about plans to develop the program.**

Consider the most effective and appropriate means to let employees know that the company is developing an EVP.

- **Gather information on employees’ interests.**

Conduct a survey on employees’ interests before beginning the EVP to get a broad sense of the level of interest, preferences for causes or issues that employees want to address, and employees’ choices for where and when to volunteer. For a successful employee survey, determine how you will use the data, ask only what you need to know, then report back to the employees on results. Use a cover letter or opening paragraph to address typical employee concerns, such as confidentiality, how the data will be used, and when the results will be reported back.

Or you can start with EVP activities, then do a survey. Some managers prefer to try a few group volunteer activities, offer a posting of volunteer opportunities, or give recognition for individual volunteer work before asking employees about starting an EVP.

Other methods can be used to gather information, such as conducting focus groups, convening brown-bag lunches, recruiting an advisory committee of employees from different departments and a range of levels, analyzing data (excluding employees’ names) from workplace giving records, etc. Consider seeking the advice of corporate communications or HR on successful and acceptable means to gather information from employees.

No matter what method you choose, build support for the program by keeping employees informed. Provide clear information about the volunteer program and how you will be obtaining employee input. Then share the results of survey responses.

A sample of the **What Are Our Employees’ Interests?** worksheet from the How-To Section is at the end of the chapter to determine your employees’ needs and in the attached CD-ROM to this book. Examples of **employee surveys** are also included. (Not available in this version)

WHAT’S WORKED: EMPLOYEE INTERESTS

- Experienced EVP managers advise that before you survey, pave the way. A statement from the CEO acknowledging the value of the current level of individual volunteering being conducted outside the company can be a big help for your EVP. In the statement, the CEO should also recognize the contributions that individual employees make to the quality of life in the communities where they live and work.
- A multi-national food products company clearly told employees the purpose of their survey: to help the company plan an EVP around their interests and the best interests of the company and the community. In addition to stating this in pre-survey communications, the message was included on the top of the written survey.

WHAT'S WORKED: IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY NEEDS

- A utility company stays up-to-date on community needs through extensive participation on nonprofit boards, town hall meetings, and work with their Volunteer Center, Corporate Volunteer Council, and United Way.
- To determine the most pressing needs of the education community, a manufacturer joined a local school system's initiative on using volunteers to enhance students' learning experiences. In addition, on the health and human services front, the company relied on a local foundation's report on the state of the city's well being.
- A financial services organization convened community summits to solicit feedback from local nonprofit and community leaders.
- A healthcare company conducts a community needs assessment every three years to determine priorities. Every two years, the company surveys employees on issues of concern.

Step **3** Identify Community Needs

Step 3 reflects the 3rd Principle of Excellence for Workplace Volunteering: Target workplace volunteering at serious social problems in the community.

The needs of your community may not be immediately obvious. In order to align the employees' broadly stated interests in issue topics such as 'youth' or 'hunger' or 'education' with real community needs, you'll need to uncover how these social issues are affecting the people in your community — and what groups or organizations are addressing them. Then you'll have a starting point to consider what volunteer opportunities employees would welcome.

Contact the community to see if an assessment of social, educational and economic needs has already been conducted in your area. These assessments may include information on how the issues are affecting local people and communities and which organizations are addressing these needs with volunteers.

Organizations to consider include:

- Local Volunteer Center
- Local Corporate Volunteer Council
- United Way
- City Cares organization
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- Community Foundation
- Department of Urban or Regional Planning at a local university
- Local school district
- State agencies such as Health & Human Services
- Government offices such as Mayor's office
- Local Board of Trade

Step **4** Putting It All Together

After tapping into a variety of resources to assemble the information about company priorities, employees' interests, and community needs, you are ready to draft a purpose statement that will articulate the foundation for the employee volunteer program.

Use the intersecting circles in the **Putting It All Together** worksheet located in the How-To Section at the end of this chapter to determine what needs your business, employees, and community have in common. Then draft your EVP purpose statement.

Additional Help?

There are many resources to provide support for business community involvement through relevant information, networking opportunities, and examples of programs that have worked locally. There are two resources that focus exclusively on volunteering: Volunteer Centers and Corporate Volunteer Councils.

Businesses work with Volunteer Centers and Corporate Volunteer Councils in many ways. Refer to these two organizations in your community for local expertise and resources in workplace volunteering. More specifically, Volunteer Centers can connect your company to volunteer opportunities, provide training and customized assistance, offer recognition and visibility opportunities, possibly in the form of sponsorship, and manage the local Corporate Volunteer Council.

More detailed information that describes the services provided by Volunteer Centers and Corporate Volunteer Councils are on the following pages.

To find the nearest
Volunteer Center in your
community, call or visit
1-800-VOLUNTEER.org.

If there is no CVC in
your area, contact
CVC@PointsofLight.org
for more information on
a CVC nearest you.

Volunteer Centers

Volunteer Centers are local leadership organizations for volunteering. All Volunteer Centers provide four main services:

1. Connect people with opportunities to serve.

Local Volunteer Centers provide easy access to a wide range of volunteer opportunities at nonprofit organizations and local government agencies serving the entire community. They link people who want to help — individuals, families, students, businesses, and their employees, civic, community, and faith-based, organizations — with places or issues where their time, talent and interests can be utilized effectively. Volunteer Centers involve volunteer groups — students, adults, employees — in episodic or short term volunteer opportunities.

2. Build capacity for effective local volunteering.

Volunteer Centers help agencies, businesses, and others who work with volunteers build their skills in recruiting, managing, retaining and recognizing volunteers. They provide volunteer management training and consultation, share volunteer management resource information, convene and advise professional associations (such as Corporate Volunteer Councils), and provide training and support for specialized groups of volunteers, such as board leaders.

3. Promote volunteering.

Volunteer Centers raise awareness of the value of volunteering. Through volunteer fairs, media campaigns, and speakers bureaus, they encourage people to volunteer and provide information about volunteering. Volunteer Centers promote national service days such as Martin Luther King, Jr. National Day of Service, Make a Difference Day, National Family Volunteer Day, National Youth Service Day, and Join Hands Day. And through a variety of recognitions and awards programs, Volunteer Centers recognize the outstanding contributions of volunteers, who make communities better places to live.

4. Participate in strategic initiatives to meet local needs.

Volunteer Centers serve as a convener for the community and catalyst for action. They work with local agencies, city government, businesses, schools, law enforcement, grassroots groups and community leaders to identify needs and mobilized volunteer response. Volunteer Centers address such diverse but critical community issues such as youth violence, disaster response, illiteracy, homelessness, hunger, frail seniors, domestic violence, teen pregnancy, and accessibility and inclusiveness. Their knowledge of the community brings people together across differences to solve problems.

Corporate Volunteer Councils

Corporate Volunteer Councils (CVCs), also commonly referred to as Business or Workplace Volunteer Councils, are local business networks of workplace volunteer program managers. While the names vary depending upon community preferences, they share a common purpose of bringing local business people together to share, learn and participate in volunteering. These councils provide an efficient way for businesses to share effective practices and address community needs through workplace volunteering. Businesses who join a CVC either have an active employee and/or retiree volunteer program or are interested in learning how to start one.

Currently, there are nearly 100 CVCs across the United States, and it is estimated that over 2,500 businesses are members of this national CVC network. Typically, CVCs are affiliated with local nonprofit organizations such as Volunteer Centers or United Way agencies while some councils are incorporated as freestanding nonprofit organizations. Membership is usually limited to businesses, but CVCs collaborate with many nonprofit organizations.

CVCs provide:

- Effective practices information on employee/retiree volunteer programs
- Information about community and nonprofit agency needs
- Venue to promote workplace volunteering
- Opportunities for professional development
- Leadership opportunities for EVP managers and their companies
- Increased visibility through multi-company, city-wide volunteer projects
- Partnership opportunities to better address complex local issues
- Plus specific local membership benefits

If there is no CVC in your area, contact CVCinfo@HandsOnNetwork.org for information on a CVC nearest you.

Other organizations that can assist include: your association of Business for Social Responsibility, Business Strengthening America, Business Roundtables, Chambers of Commerce, Regional Association of Grantmakers—affiliated with the Council on Foundations, to name just a few. More details about these organizations can be found in [Additional Resources](#).

What Are Our Business Priorities?

Does your organization's mission statement, vision or values statements or social policy documents include a reference to its commitment to the community?

Yes No If yes, what does it say?

What will be the connection between the purpose of the EVP and your organization's mission statement?

Select a list of company leaders to interview about organizational issues and priorities:

- CEO
- CFO
- COO
- Other Senior Leaders of the following departments:
 - Communications
 - Human Resources
 - Marketing
 - Information Technology
 - Operational Units (make a list specific to your organization)
 - Philanthropy/ contributions
 - Public Affairs
 - Public Relations
 - Other _____

What Are Our Employees' Interests?

Use key communications vehicles to gain feedback from employees about their volunteer interests. Below are examples of questions to help identify which vehicle is best suited for your company.

What are the organization's most effective – both formal and informal – internal communications vehicles?

- E-mail
- Team/Sales Meetings
- Company Newsletter
- Bulletin Board
- Statement from CEO
- Company Intranet
- Message on Paystubs
- Other _____

How can you use these methods of communications to let your employees know about the idea of an EVP?

Use these methods of communication to determine your employees' interests in volunteering. What did your research show are the top interests of employees?

Putting It All Together

What do you believe would be the most compelling research info or business justification to support an EVP at your company?

What are your main business priorities?

What are your main employee interests?

What are your main community needs?

SELECT RESOURCES

To help you get started, the following pages include a number of resource organizations. This is not an inclusive list of all organizations involved in community service.

Organizations Furthering Workplace Volunteering and Social Responsibility

Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network

www.PointsofLight.org

A nonpartisan and nonprofit organization that supports and organizes the vital work of community volunteers who help solve our nation's most serious social problems by bringing people and resources together — the Foundation raises public awareness about the urgent need to solve serious social problems through volunteering; builds knowledge, skills and programs for volunteers to succeed; and provides leadership to mobilize volunteers in thousands of local communities across the country.

Corporate Volunteer Councils (CVCs)

Corporate Volunteer Councils (CVCs) are local business networks of workplace volunteer program managers bringing area business people together to share, learn and participate in volunteering with one another. Currently, nearly 100 CVCs exist across the United States, and it is estimated that over 2,500 businesses are members of this CVC network. Typically, CVCs are affiliated with local nonprofit organizations such as Volunteer Centers or United Way agencies while some councils are incorporated as freestanding nonprofit organizations. To learn if there is a CVC in your area, contact your local Volunteer Center or email CVC@PointsofLight.org.

Connect America

Connect America, an initiative of the Points of Light Foundation, is a national partnership of diverse nonprofit organizations, businesses, civic associations, fraternal organizations, communities of faith, and government agencies — working in collaboration to leverage knowledge, resources and volunteers to address social and community problems. For more information, email ConnectAmerica@PointsofLight.org.

Volunteer Centers

Volunteer Centers mobilize people and resources to deliver creative solutions to community problems. A Volunteer Center is a convener for the community, a catalyst for social action and a key resource for volunteer involvement. The Volunteer Center's core identity is centered around bringing people and community needs together through a range of programs and services. The Volunteer Center's role is not to replace other agencies or organizations within the community, but rather to bridge the gap in services provided by agencies.

To find the Volunteer Center in your community, call or visit 1-800-VOLUNTEER.org.

Business Strengthening America

www.bsanetwork.com

Business Strengthening America is a business driven initiative to mobilize the business community in support of effective service and civic engagement by every American. Business Strengthening America aspires to stimulate long-lasting cultural change in the workplace that makes service to the community an even more integral part of the American business culture.

Business for Social Responsibility (BSR)

www.bsr.org

A national organization that helps companies of all sizes and sectors to achieve business objectives and efficiencies in ways that demonstrate respect for ethical values, people, communities, and the environment — leading global business partner, BSR equips its member companies with the expertise to design, implement, and evaluate successful, socially responsible business policies, practices and processes.

Independent Sector

www.independentsector.org

An organization whose vision is a just and inclusive society of active citizens, vibrant communities, effective institutions, and a healthy democracy. Their mission is to promote, strengthen, and advance the nonprofit and philanthropic community to foster private initiative for the public good.

The Center for Corporate Citizenship at Boston College

www.bc.edu/centers/ccc/index.html

A nonprofit membership association providing leadership in establishing corporate citizenship as a business essential, so all companies act as economic and social assets to the communities they impact — services include professional development, custom research and information services, and an annual international Leaders Conference.

Hands on Network

www.handsonnetwork.org

An alliance of volunteer organizations that plan and manage meaningful volunteer opportunities in partnership with 3,600 nonprofit organizations and schools across the country working to build community through service and civic engagement

Committee to Encourage Corporate Philanthropy

www.corphilanthropy.org

A national forum of business CEOs with an agenda exclusively focused on corporate giving — their mission is to raise the level and quality of strategic corporate giving nationally and globally through identifying, advancing, promoting and recognizing best practices and measurements of corporate philanthropy.

United Way

www.unitedway.org

A national organization dedicated to leading the United Way movement in making measurable impact in every community across America. Their National Corporate Leadership Program (NCL) engages partner United Ways and global corporations to achieve corporate philanthropic objectives that increase community impact.

U.S. Chamber of Commerce/Center for Corporate Citizenship (CCC)

www.uschamber.com/CCC/default.htm

A nonprofit organization and an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce dedicated to providing a forum for corporate citizenship issues, advancing corporate and chamber civic and humanitarian initiatives and promoting public-private-nonprofit cooperation at home and abroad

INTERNATIONAL

Business in the Community

www.bitc.org.uk

A unique movement of companies across the United Kingdom committed to continually improving their positive impact on society, with a core membership of 700 companies, including 77 percent of the FTSE 100.

The Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum

www.iblf.org

An international educational charity to promote responsible business practices internationally that benefit business and society, and which help to achieve social, economic and environmentally sustainable development, particularly in new and emerging market economies — the Points of Light Foundation works with the IBLF to support and promote employee engagement through a three year awareness raising campaign, named ENGAGE. www.iblf.org/csr/csrwebassist.nsf/content/f1c2a3v4.html

POINTS OF LIGHT FOUNDATION RESOURCES

The following publications can be purchased by calling the Points of Light Foundation's Volunteer Marketplace Catalog at 800-272-8306.

Points of Light Foundation Resources

Email: Info@PointsofLight.org
1400 I St. NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 729-8000
fax: (202) 729-8100
www.PointsofLight.org

Building Value: The Employee Volunteer Program as a Strategic Resource For Business

This in-depth manual explores ways that managers of employee volunteer programs have successfully aligned their programs to meet the strategic needs of their business. Learn how to analyze the purpose of your company's volunteer program and explore methods to help manage corporate volunteering during organizational change. Take your program one step further (Order #140)!

Chief Executives Talk About the Business Value of Workplace Volunteering

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of Deloitte & Touche, the 2nd edition is now available! Read commentaries from leading CEOs who have integrated volunteering into their business and their philosophies on community investment and involvement. Learn about the Principles of Excellence for Workplace Volunteering — benchmarks for developing, integrating and managing effective, sustainable employee volunteer programs (Order #103).

Developing Excellence in Workplace Volunteer Programs: Guidelines for Success

Printed through the generous support of KPMG, the 2nd edition is now available! Learn easy, step-by-step ways to customize your employee volunteer program to best fit your business culture and operations to benefit the company, employees, and community. Gain tips from business leaders in the field of workplace volunteering about how to develop a successful employee volunteer program. Build upon effective practices to integrate volunteering into your business (Order #105).

Employee Volunteer Programs: Building Blocks for Success

This series of papers features industry-specific information for Small to Medium Size Businesses, Large Businesses, Energy and Utility, Health Care, and Financial Services Companies. Learn trends, effective practices, and ways to refine and enhance your volunteer program – specific to your industry – to meet corporate, employee, and community needs through eight simple steps.

The Employee Volunteer Program as a Strategic Resource: The Link Grows Stronger

This Landmark research study from 2000 illuminates a major metamorphosis in the way companies integrate effective employee volunteer programs into their core business functions – and the benefits they get when they do. Explore insights into the opportunities and challenges programs face today, and how companies use them in PR, marketing/communications, employee skill-building, recruiting/retention, and valuing diversity (Order # 136).

Toolkit for Developing & Strengthening Corporate Volunteer Councils

Printed through the generous support of JPMorgan Chase, this toolkit is packed with exciting examples from CVCs across the country, and it offers useful worksheets to help your CVC think through the various stages of development (Order #11).