

Why should companies offer Corporate Volunteering (CV) programs?

Even when working in their dream job – employees value breaks from their professional daily routine which is why many employers organize week-end retreats or motivational workshops.

A new measure with a social aspect is to establish a Corporate Volunteering program. By giving your employees time for voluntary work, they not only get some distance from their daily routines but gain new perspectives. Increased team spirit, higher loyalty towards you as an employer as well as reduced stress and lower burn-out risk are just some positive effects of Corporate Volunteering. On top of that, you are supporting a good cause.

More than 80 % of German corporates already push their employees' social commitment through CV programs – a clear answer to their workers' wishes: 69 % of a Roland Berger survey of attendees expect Corporate volunteering opportunities; more than 80 % consider CV offers as a crucial factor for choosing a job.

CV is usually used as a HR development tool as well as a part of the company's CSR strategy. On the one hand, CV shows entrepreneurial responsibility and helps to develop region where the company is sited. On the other hand, CV has the ability to foster teambuilding, professional, methodical and managerial expertise as well as social skills.

Depending on whether the focus is on HR or CSR, there is a choice between several types of Corporate Volunteering.

3 types of Corporate Volunteering

1. The most common way companies choose to push the social involvement of their employees is to offer so-called Social Days. For one day, a big group of employees leave their desks to help a social institution. Usually, the tasks are rather hands-on (like renovating rooms, doing some gardening work etc.), so time- and money-intensive that the non-profit organisation cannot tackle the challenge alone. Local „Freiwilligenagenturen“ as well as organisations like Serve the City or tatkraeftig.org have good relationships to local non-profit organisations to plan volunteering efforts, coordinate logistics, provide supplies and so on. Purchasing these services can make a community volunteer project much simpler to carry out. vostel.de even organizes volunteering projects for English-speaking employees.
2. Another way to support non-profit organisations as a cor-



An example of volunteers help

porate is pro-bono engagement: employees offer specific skills (i. e. marketing, communication, finance) in order to help social institutions professionalise themselves. Probono is a professional partner to match corporates and their employees' skills with non-profits.

3. There are many companies and initiatives like Serve the City and vostel.de that offer a selection of volunteering activities where private people as well as corporate volunteers can get involved. The platform vostel.de also offers volunteering projects especially for employees. Companies can pick from various short-term projects, ranging from handing out food to the homeless in a local „Suppenküche“, sorting material donations at a „Kleiderkammer“, to spending time with kids at an emergency shelter for refugees. The wide variety of projects allows companies to adjust the CV program to internal planning but also to the individual schedule of each employee. Additionally, employers can keep track of their employees' engagement via the digital platform vostel.de.

With all this in mind ... how about trading the annual team event for a day off to volunteer? ■

THE AUTHOR



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Stephanie Frost

Director Corporate Volunteering, [vostel](http://vostel.de) volunteering UG (haftungsbeschränkt)