

Leveraging the power of virtual volunteering to engage employees worldwide

A unified corporate giving program with global impact? A company-wide volunteering program that gives your staff meaningful community engagement? As a social responsibility or community development manager have you struggled to make a business case for giving back and then found that your efforts lack the impact that would make a difference to you, your employees, your company, and of course, your beneficiaries?

The answer may lie in virtual volunteering, that is, volunteering online. With a cohort of virtual volunteers, your organization can create global networks and communities, extending the reach of your organization past its geographical boundaries.

Voluntary work has been shown to bring benefits such as employee retention, and personal and professional development. The business case for volunteering and benefits to employees' well-being has been made, yet the practicalities of initiating and running such a program may not come easily. Businesses with multiple locations especially may find themselves with a hodge-podge of well-meaning but poorly defined localized activities that fail to make the most of its staff's skills and knowledge.

"Overcoming geographic boundaries and time constraints, virtual volunteering connects volunteers of various backgrounds, skills and cultures that may not be available locally" says Ryan Scott. In an age where being online has become a way of life, virtual volunteering is becoming easier, more cost effective and a legitimate means of generating social impact.

Virtual volunteering offers a financial advantage, allowing you to maximize your financial and human capital for far reaching impact and ROIs. Online communication technology facilitates in-depth engagement, while effectively building community relationships. Virtual relationships can result from more frequent and long lasting interaction.

"Even though we are just corresponding over email, I feel like I am a part of what she is doing, and that's pretty great." Michael Edward Jones, a channel marketing expert in California says of his relationship with his mentee Murni. Through MicroMentor, Michael was able to share his expertise and experience with Murni, almost completely via e-mail, and in his spare time after work or on breaks. Michael emphasizes that virtual mentoring can create a relationship that lasts a lifetime. "Working with Murni has provided me much more than I thought it would. She gives me a new way to learn about the world. Even if time passes and things change"

As employees do not have to travel, or spend time outside of the workspace, volunteering online can be easily factored into work schedules with minimum disruption and your company can deploy its staff from the comfort of their offices or living rooms.



Michael Edward Jones
Channel Marketing Expert at
Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Despite the virtual element, online volunteering still fosters the feeling of a common cause among staff. Moreover, employees at multiple locations, even across the globe, as well as employees with mobility issues or family challenges can participate.

While the process of maximizing your company's potential through virtual volunteering may seem daunting; linking volunteers to causes; marketing and public relations; navigating rules and regulations; metrics and analytics; and ensuring both employee and beneficiary have a mutually beneficial relationship; platforms such as MicroMentor can help your company leverage its staff's skills and knowledge.

Volunteering, like work and entertainment, is moving into the virtual world. It offers a viable solution for corporate contexts with budget and human resource constraints while creating positive social impact. This new volunteering option is flexible, easily adaptable and supports a company culture that merges its own employees' well-being with a global outlook on corporate social responsibility.

CONTACT

TAJ TINSLEY
Manager, Business
Development & Marketing
MicroMentor
Taj@micromentor.org

45 SW Ankeny Street
Portland, Oregon 97204
888.842.0842
mercycorps.org



ABOUT MERCY CORPS AND MICROMENTOR

Mercy Corps is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In disaster, in hardship, in more than 40 countries around the world, we partner to put bold solutions into action — helping people triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within. Now, and for the future.

MicroMentor, a Mercy Corps social enterprise initiative, is an online mentoring platform that connects entrepreneurs and experienced professionals and corporate employee volunteers in meaningful, one-to-one mentoring relationships.

We connect business professionals with entrepreneurs across 92 countries and all 50 U.S. states, establishing business mentoring relationships that help entrepreneurs realize their dreams of small business and give your employees the satisfaction of giving back and sharing their business knowledge.

MicroMentor supports the global employee engagement efforts of companies such as Hewlett Packard Enterprise, S&P Global, IBM and PIMCO Foundation and works to power the State of New York's mentoring platform BusinessMentorNY.