

## **From Roadblocks to Results: Meeting Summary**

Panel discussion on best practices for employee volunteer programs, focusing on engagement, communication, measurement, and collaboration strategies.

### **Highlights**

#### **1. Time-Bound Campaigns for Employee Volunteerism**

- Carley Stephens explained Gas South's shift from monthly volunteer events to a concentrated two-week campaign, citing resource constraints and challenges in recruiting volunteers, which led to improved engagement and better alignment with nonprofit needs.
- The two-week initiative, held annually in June, includes 2-3 activities daily with smaller groups of 10-20 employees, allowing for curated and impactful services for nonprofits.
- This approach has been implemented for three years, with six months of advance notice provided to nonprofits and employees, enabling better planning and flexibility.

#### **2. Global Month of Volunteerism at CBRE**

- Quiara Mosley shared CBRE's November Global Month of Volunteerism, which includes employee-organized events, virtual volunteering, and corporate activities, engaging employees across 40 countries and logging over 12,000 volunteer hours in 2022.
- The campaign features innovative elements like a Bingo card with 25 activities, incentivizing participation through gamification and rewards like branded fanny packs, which resulted in over 1,200 submissions globally.
- The initiative aligns with Thanksgiving in the U.S., fostering gratitude and giving back, and has driven a 1,000% increase in logged volunteer hours between 2021 and 2022.

#### **3. Motorola Solutions Foundation's Global Month of Service**

- Jenna Coyne described Motorola Solutions Foundation's 8-week Volunteer-a-thon, which logged over 60,000 volunteer hours in 2024, contributing to the company's total of 106,000 hours across 22,000 employees in 60 countries.
- The initiative leverages friendly competition among teams structured by the executive committee, with 75 team captains trained to lead localized efforts and ensure alignment with community needs.
- The program emphasizes clear expectations, long-term planning, and strong senior leadership involvement, with nominations for team captains coming from VPs or higher.

#### **4. Measurement and Metrics in Volunteer Programs**

- Megan Dominguez emphasized the importance of measuring volunteer participation, retention, and engagement strategically, avoiding unrealistic targets that could demotivate employees.
- Jenna Coyne highlighted Motorola's focus on new hire engagement, participation rates among acquired employees, and volunteer retention as key metrics for demonstrating impact to the board of directors.
- Quiara Mosley shared CBRE's tracking of chapter leader engagement, noting that markets with active leaders have a 3.5% higher participation rate, with leaders hosting at least four events annually.

## **5. Communication Challenges and Strategies**

- Jenna Coyne discussed Motorola's partnership with the internal communications team to send weekly emails during the Global Month of Service and maintain an active intranet page showcasing volunteer opportunities.
- Quiara Mosley explained CBRE's approach to reaching employees embedded with clients, leveraging QR codes, local communications personnel, and alliance directors to disseminate information effectively.
- Carley Stephens shared Gas South's creative strategy of bringing presentations directly to employees during lunch hours, using sound systems and direct engagement to overcome communication barriers.

## **6. Rewards and Recognition Programs**

- Quiara Mosley described CBRE's quarterly rewards program, where 250 employees globally receive \$100 USD to donate to a nonprofit of their choice, achieving a 100% redemption rate and fostering engagement through surprise rewards.
- Jenna Coyne highlighted Motorola's CEO Volunteer Award, which provides high-visibility recognition during global town halls, alongside Dollars for Doers and matching donation programs that incentivize volunteerism.
- Both programs emphasize the importance of rewarding behaviors that align with corporate goals and creating moments of surprise and delight to sustain employee engagement.

## **7. Collaboration with Nonprofits**

- Carley Stephens emphasized the need for nonprofits to focus on meaningful partnerships rather than catering solely to corporate metrics, suggesting flexibility in volunteer activities to match employee demographics and interests.
- Daryl Carlson from Alzheimer's Association highlighted the need for skills-based volunteers, such as data mining professionals, to address gaps in expertise and expand volunteer opportunities.
- Elsie from the chat mentioned the importance of volunteers helping youth with soft skills like interview preparation and professional development, aligning with corporate workforce development initiatives.

## **8. Professional Development Through Volunteerism**

- Carley Stephens noted that employees often overlook the professional development benefits of volunteerism, such as leadership experience, organizational skills, and internal networking opportunities across departments.
- Jenna Coyne emphasized the social and networking aspects of volunteering, which foster camaraderie and connections among employees who might not typically work together.
- Both panelists highlighted the importance of empowering employees to take ownership of volunteerism, enabling them to develop skills and engage meaningfully with their communities.