



Corporate Philanthropy Overview

In today's business environment, workers are attracted to work for, and stay with, organizations that have a brand they are proud to share. Workplaces with a philanthropy-forward culture are better positioned to improve employee satisfaction and productivity, as well as the bottom line.

When establishing a workplace giving program, ensure it aligns with your organization's values. Your philanthropy model could include social investments, charitable contributions, volunteer engagement, and corporate sponsorship to help address community needs. Whether hyper-focused on a specific cause or driven by causes employees care most about, develop a philanthropy philosophy that works best for your organization.

Encouraging participation by employees at all levels of the organization promotes an engaged and community-minded workforce. Individuals can give their time, talent and/or treasure. Employees can gain valuable leadership skills by getting involved in nonprofit committees or on a board of advisors.

Lead by example with corporate-sponsored activities, such as volunteer opportunities (on-site or in the community) or donation drives (to collect goods or funds). Individual employees and departments can be empowered to organize charitable activities with their colleagues.

Incentives can encourage employees to embrace volunteerism. Offering paid volunteer time allows employees to give back during regularly scheduled work hours, while a Dollars for Doers program provides "reimbursement" for employees who volunteer on their personal time. For a double win, deposit Dollars for Doers into a charitable giving account rather than an employee's payroll check, so they can donate to their favorite nonprofit organization(s).

Employees might also appreciate the opportunity to get involved in a philanthropy committee, to help evaluate employee inquiries or award corporate sponsorships.

Criteria for Approval

Strategic corporate philanthropy means that employers have discretion in how to influence positive outcomes for the greater good. In addition to determining criteria for when events or causes will be supported, it's equally important to outline cause for declination. Some points to consider:

- Does the cause/event reflect your organization's core values, objectives, brand?
- Does support present a risk to your organization's reputation?
- Could the cause/event be construed as prejudiced or discriminatory?
- Is there a potential conflict of interest?

Some fundraising events might have controversial elements that merit thoughtful consideration before corporate support is approved. Below are a few examples of how to evaluate and address potential conflicts.



- Potential Conflict: Fundraising event held at a shooting range to support cancer research.
 - Solution: Semi-automatic firearms are excluded because they are assault weapons.
- Potential Conflict: Literacy event held at a gaming establishment.
 - Solution: Event does not promote gambling and the casino is only the venue for event.

Informed and effective decision-making will help organizations maintain integrity in their efforts for positive community impact.