

HOW VOLUNTEERING CAN IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND PRODUCTIVITY OF EMPLOYEES



Volunteering can help protect the mental and physical health of your employees, as well as increase the productivity and motivation of workers within your organisation.

As Ariana Huffington from *The Huffington Post* mentions in her 2014 published book *Thrive – The Third Metric to Redefining Success and Creating a Happier Life*, the effects of ‘giving’ in the workplace show the impact of volunteering on establishing a healthier, more creative and more collaborative workforce.



UnitedHealth Group conducted a study in 2013 on whether employee volunteer programs increased engagement and productivity. Researchers discovered that 75% of the employees who had volunteered said overall they felt healthier, and they improved time management skills and the ability to connect with peers. 95% of employees also reported that volunteering enriched their sense of purpose in life.

From these findings, you could say that volunteering can be the ‘caring cure.’ According to helpguide.org, volunteering time to give to others can combat depression. As volunteering keeps individuals in regular contact with others, your employees will begin to develop a solid support system and keep sufferers of depression from being isolated and feeling alone.

Another workplace benefit that stems from volunteering is that employees can develop or build upon different skills in the greater community. These skills learnt through extensive volunteer training can teach them valuable skills that would then be applied in the workplace. It’s a win for the community and a win for your organisation!

Helping others and reaching out to your community can also affect the happiness of individuals and their surrounding environment. If more people in your workplace volunteered their time to assist others, the overall effect of happiness would increase dramatically. Researchers at the London School of Economics assessed the relationship between volunteering and measures of happiness in a large group of adults. Results revealed that the more people that volunteered, the happier they were.

If your goal within your company is to help improve the health of your employees, to affectively increase the productivity or positively change the workplace environment – arranging a volunteering program within your organisation would most certainly be the better way to go about it.

References

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