

# Improving business volunteering: 5 simple steps

## I am a Business ↴

## I am a Charity ↴

#1

**Change the conversation from cost to value.** It can be easy to see volunteering as a business cost but in fact it adds huge value. From team building and motivation to positive PR, volunteering is an opportunity, not an expense.

**Be clear about the business benefits.** Businesses don't just want you to come to them asking for time and money. They appreciate that volunteering can be beneficial to their business so make it clear what you bring to the table.

#2

**Get dates in the diary as far in advance as possible.** There will always be an excuse for not volunteering tomorrow but 6 months in advance can be built around.

**Get to know them.** Volunteering is personal, so make a personal connection. Get to know their business, go and meet the employees and offer them something tailored and valuable for them.

#3

**Have a range of volunteering options.** Employees are all different. They may want to work in or out of office hours, in education or construction, teaching or rehabilitation etc... make sure you cater for everyone.

**Be clear about what you need.** The main motivation for taking part in volunteering is altruism. Businesses want to help, but they also want it to be straightforward. Summed up in a quote from our research: "[Charities should] be clear about their purpose! Be clear about what help they need!"

#4

**Work with a broker.** In our study, businesses told us that one of the main barriers to volunteering was time. They also told us that the main benefit of working with brokers was that it reduced the amount of time spent on management... A match made in heaven?

**Be flexible in what you offer and the way you offer it.** All people are different - all employees are different. Companies don't want a one-size-fits-all approach to their volunteering. Give them options in terms of activities tailored for different skill-sets, skill-levels, group sizes and time commitments.

#5

**Take on a challenge.** We found that charities are much more likely to be volunteering with children or in community spaces than other areas. However, the most 'beneficial' areas to volunteer in are ones such as 'rehabilitation' and 'mental illness'. Don't limit yourself to the 'traditional' areas of volunteering, do something different that will really benefit your business.

**Take their challenges into account.** Businesses say that the biggest barriers to volunteering are the time taken to organise it and having people out of the office. Take as much of the admin out of their hands as possible and plan it around their existing schedules.