ARES

Philanthropy, Purpose and Professional Development: Why Workplace Volunteer Programs Matter

Contents

A Message from Michelle Armstrong

When Ares Management LLC ("Ares" or the "firm") launched what we call Ares in Motion ("AIM") in 2012 to support our local communities, the firm and the world were different places. With just 512 employees, we had yet to live through the unprecedented challenge of a global pandemic. Indeed, The Golden Rule — "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" — holds newfound meaning when we consider the interdependence that we gained throughout that unparalleled period in modern times.

Thus, as Ares' global footprint continues to grow, so does our duty to consider how we can add value to people's lives. The firm's core values — collaborative, responsible, entrepreneurial, self-aware and trustworthy — not only describe our approach to investment activities and business operations, but also to how we support nonprofits. And while Ares employees appreciate the "give back" opportunities that AIM offers, we believe that the effects of service concurrently transform individuals as they develop, strengthen and apply skills through volunteerism.

Understanding what those skills are and why they matter catalyzed this study. We sought to examine who participates and why, the capabilities that employees believe that they acquire, and if and how volunteerism truly boosts their engagement. In our view, these findings would help us evolve and expand AIM, and hopefully encourage other organizations to do the same for their own engagement activities.

We believe that this research is the first to probe these queries with a global population of survey and interview subjects, including both Ares and non-Ares employees. While the dialogue frequently centers around how workplace volunteer programs help bolster organizations' reputational brand, the
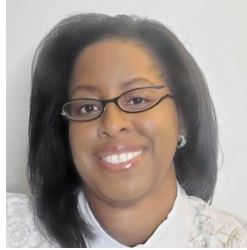
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> **We believe that the effects of service concurrently transform individuals as they develop, strengthen and apply skills through volunteerism.**

effects on those who participate in these programs have been relatively unclear. In our view, this unequivocally matters if employers want to attract and retain talent as well as better ensure a quality on-the-job experience.

Perhaps most important, a key goal of this study was to understand how workplace volunteer programs empower employees to be change agents — not just for others, but also for themselves. Acts of selflessness tend to focus on those on whose behalf they are performed, but we wanted to widen the aperture. If acts of altruism can also create unexpected yet brilliant opportunities for employees to gain and sharpen highly desirable skills, then we wanted to mine for nuggets of knowledge to help inform our own practice and that of others.

It is our hope that what we learned over the course of this nine-month exploration grants greater insights into the critical role of workplace volunteer programs. As the world turns, we must be nimble — and humble — enough to shift our thinking and approach when it comes to how we spur positive change while remaining highly attentive to those within our organizations who help make doing so possible. We trust that this report inspires others as much as it has us to more thoughtfully and empathetically take responsibility, both for our communities and our employees who tirelessly serve them.

Very truly yours,
Michelle N. Armstrong
Head of Philanthropy

Why This Study Matters

Workplace volunteer programs — defined as organizational support, often in the form of paid leave or sponsorship, for employees pursuing volunteer opportunities or community services — have existed for years in the U.S. and across the globe.[1] Recently, volunteerism overall has been stagnant or trending down, yet on the rise in corporate settings. The Society for Human Resource Management reports that workplace volunteerism remains vibrant in the U.S., with nearly half of companies (47%) offering these programs in 2018, up 7% from 2014.[2] Globally, Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose — a CEO-led coalition that acts as a trusted advisor to companies on their corporate purpose journey — reported in 2019 that two in every three of its member firms (66%) provided paid-time-off volunteer programs for employees, up 10% from three years earlier.[3]

Despite these data, the pandemic unquestionably transformed the workplace in ways that continue to yield significant ripple effects. As many employees moved the locus of their work from the office to their home over the past few years, some also began to reevaluate the centrality of work to their life. In 2021 — the height of what was termed the "Great Resignation" in the U.S. — 47.8 million Americans, or almost a quarter of the workforce, left their job.[4] By the end of 2022, the number of job vacancies increased 58%, according to the U.S. Labor Department.[5]

Why the mass exodus? Job dissatisfaction served as a primary driver and remains a concern today. Gallup notes that U.S. employee engagement rates — determined by the involvement and enthusiasm of employees in their work and workplace — dropped from 36% in 2020 to 32% in 2022 despite having trended up in previous years.[6] According to the pollster, declines in both connection to organizational

mission and opportunities to learn and grow professionally contributed to the post-pandemic plummet in engagement. Furthermore, the decrease in employee engagement has been particularly pronounced among workers ages 35 and younger.[7]

Evidence of pandemic fallout in the workplace also surfaces in other ways. For example, Deloitte and PwC report that their younger U.K. recruits whose education was interrupted during COVID possess weaker teamwork and communication skills than pre-pandemic recruits.[8] The absence of these critical capabilities has required the companies to assume training responsibility for basic professional and workforce skills.[9]

In addition, worker dislocations have left many employees from new hires to managers feeling lonely. An Ernst & Young study of more than 5,000 workers in Brazil, China, Germany, the U.K. and the U.S. found that 82% of respondents felt lonely at work, including nearly half (49%) who said that they experienced more loneliness than before the pandemic.[10]

U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy sounded a similar alarm about loneliness in a May 2023 advisory.[11] "In recent years, about one in two adults in America reported experiencing loneliness," he penned. "And that was before the COVID-19 pandemic cut off so many of us from friends, loved ones and support systems."

The advisory went on to advocate volunteerism as a means for building social connections. "There is, for instance, a virtuous cycle between social connection and volunteerism or service," it asserts. "Those who are more connected to their communities are more likely to engage in service, and those who are engaged in service are more likely to feel connected to their communities and the individuals in it."

Thus, this study and its findings come at a pivotal point in time.

1. What is employee-sponsored volunteerism? Society for Human Resource Management

2. Volunteer Programs that Employees Can Get Excited About, Jessica Rodell, *Harvard Business Review*, January-February 2021

3. Ibid.

4. Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics, January 2022

5. Ibid.

6. U.S. Employee Engagement Needs a Rebound in 2023, Gallup

7. Ibid.

8. Pandemic-era Graduates Struggle with Teamwork, Say Deloitte and PwC, *Financial Times*

9. Ibid.

10. Employees Around the Globe Feel Lonely, Crave a Sense of Belonging, *Society for Human Resource Management HR News*

11. Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community

Purpose and Rationale

Ares is a leading global alternative investment manager, offering clients complementary primary and secondary investment solutions across the credit, private equity, real estate and infrastructure asset classes. In addition to its business priorities, Ares maintains an abiding commitment to help improve people's lives by supporting nonprofit organizations through employee volunteerism, matching donations, charitable sponsorships and nonprofit board training, placement and service.

The firm launched AIM, its signature employee engagement program, in 2012 to encourage grassroots service in the communities in regions where Ares operates. Among the firm's hallmark AIM initiatives is an annual Summer of Service, which allows employees across Ares' global offices to design, champion and lead outreach initiatives such as entrepreneurial pitch competitions for students, community beautification projects, professional mentorship programs for women and pro-bono assistance to underserved communities. In 2023, the firm received The Civic 50 Award for its philanthropic efforts, an honor that recognizes the 50 most community-minded companies in the U.S.[12]

Given Ares' unwavering commitment to make a positive, sustained difference in the world, the firm sought to more deeply understand the value of workplace volunteer programs like AIM. Various studies suggest that these programs can boost engagement, productivity, recruitment and retention. Research also points out that those who volunteer perform better on work tasks and are more likely to help others and voice their ideas. Furthermore, the data show that the act of volunteering improves employees' sense of purpose, well-being, and physical and mental health.[13]

The Ares Philanthropy team collaborated with Edge Research, a woman-owned marketing research company, to examine the value of workplace volunteer programs through a study that engaged a representative sample of more than 5,100 general population employees in five countries where the firm maintains operations: India, Singapore, the UAE, the U.K. and the U.S.[14] A companion study was conducted among over 800 Ares employees.

The data show that the act of volunteering improves employees' sense of purpose, well-being, and physical and mental health.

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12. Points of Light Announces 2023 Honorees of The Civic 50 and Releases Key Insights, May 23, 2023

13. Volunteer Programs that Employees Can Get Excited About, Jessica Rodell, *Harvard Business Review*, January-February 2021

14. In this research, workplace volunteer programs include programs at companies and businesses across industries as well as nonprofit organizations and government entities. Full-time employees of all types were included in the study.

Purpose and Rationale, continued

The Ares Philanthropy team posited that everyone wins when employees volunteer their time and expertise: nonprofits receive needed assistance, employees enhance professional and personal skills and organizations gain more skilled — and engaged — team members. Ares Philanthropy and Edge Research engaged in a nine-month study to ascertain the extent to which this thinking would prove accurate. This report highlights the global study findings.

Philanthropy, Purpose and Professional Development: Why Workplace Volunteer Programs Matter utilized quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to probe the connections among workplace volunteer programs, employees' development of specific "soft" or social and emotional skills, the professional (and personal) effects of these programs on workers, and the benefits that organizations and the communities where they do business reap as a result of this kind of engagement. The research revealed findings that Ares will use to inform the evolution and expansion of AIM. Moreover, these data are intended to help industry peers and other organizations strategically strengthen how they support workers' efforts to improve people's lives through volunteerism.

Hypothesis:

When individuals give back and donate their time and expertise to nonprofit organizations, everyone wins:

- Nonprofits and charities receive valuable assistance
- Employees learn critical social and emotional skills that help them professionally and personally
- Organizations emerge with a stronger team
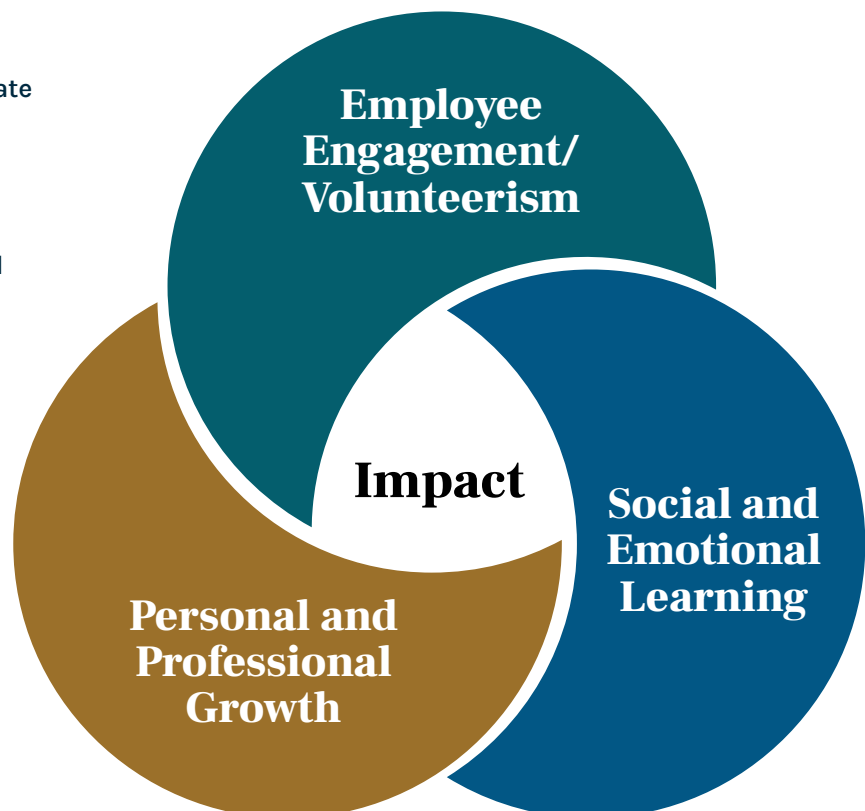
Key Findings

1 Employees whose organization offers workplace volunteer programs are more satisfied with their professional life.

Across the five countries included in this study, employees who participate in the volunteer programs that their organization offers are more satisfied overall with their job (79% satisfied versus 55% among those who do not volunteer), their organization's culture (75% versus 54%) and the leadership team (71% versus 45%). They also are significantly more likely to feel that they have opportunities to grow professionally (70% versus 39%) and develop new skills at work (72% versus 47%), two goals that new employees say are of critical importance when determining what organization to join. Furthermore, workplace volunteers are twice as likely to recommend their organization to jobseekers: 39% are "promoters" versus just 19% of those who do not volunteer.

Net Promoter Scores

Volunteers +20

Non-Volunteers -24

All Employees +10

-100   0   100
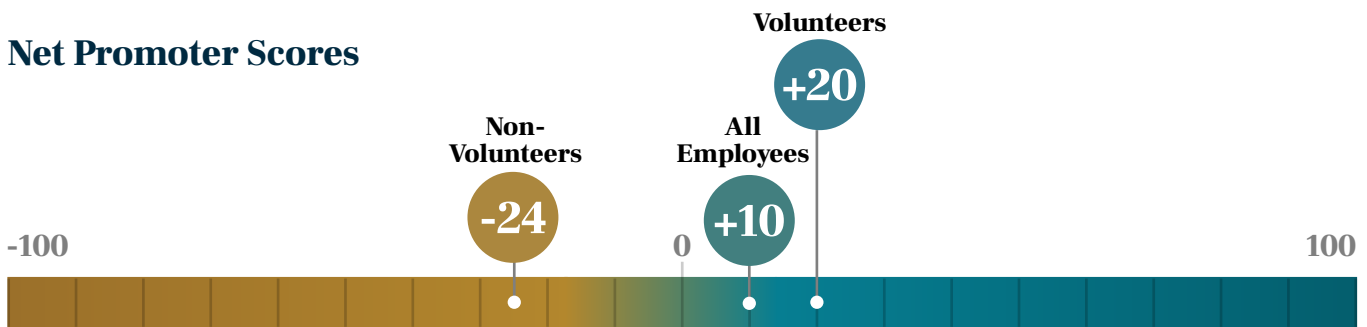
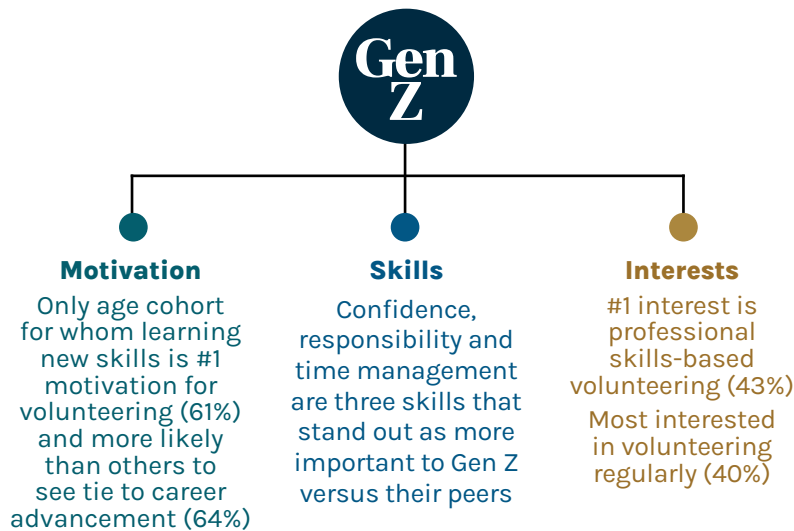## 2 Workplace volunteer programs offer pathways to develop the skills that employees and employers want.

The majority of employees globally (64%) believe that the opportunities volunteerism affords have a positive impact on an individual's professional growth and development. Teamwork, responsibility, communication and problem-solving are in the "sweet spot" of skills that both employees and employers want and that they believe volunteerism helps develop. However, employees also seek ways to develop their project management, critical thinking and creative skills, i.e., capabilities that workplace volunteer initiatives could potentially help strengthen.

Volunteerism Develops
Kindness, Empathy, Collaboration, Respect for different people

Valued by All + Volunteerism Develops
Teamwork, Responsibility, Communication, Problem-Solving

Employer Values
Time management, Commitment

Employees Want to Develop
Leadership, Critical thinking, Project management, Confidence, Creativity

Key Findings, continued

3 **Generation Z ("Gen Z") workers are particularly motivated to make a difference while gaining new skills.**

Gen Z employees, i.e., those ages 18 to 26, want to make a positive impact on society and look to their employer to provide opportunities to help make this happen. Nevertheless, this is the only age cohort for whom the number one reason to participate in workplace volunteerism is to learn new skills. Specifically, they are interested in developing leadership (15%), confidence (14%), responsibility (13%) and time management skills (13%). They are also more likely than older workers to identify a connection between volunteering and career advancement (64% versus 52%).

Gen Z

Motivation
Only age cohort for whom learning new skills is #1 motivation for volunteering (61%) and more likely than others to see tie to career advancement (64%)

Skills
Confidence, responsibility and time management are three skills that stand out as more important to Gen Z versus their peers

Interests
#1 interest is professional skills-based volunteering (43%)
Most interested in volunteering regularly (40%)

4 **Employees are motivated when workplace volunteer programs lead with purpose.**

Employees point out that maximizing both a workplace volunteer program's value and their experiences with it begins with recognizing that the primary goal is to help improve people's quality of life. Employees participate because they are thankful for what they have (96%), want to make a difference (94%) and feel a responsibility to help others (94%).

96%
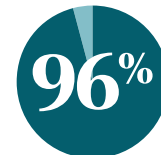
"I am thankful for what I have and want to help others."

5 **Successful workplace volunteer programs require executive leaders' buy-in and allow employees voice and choice.**
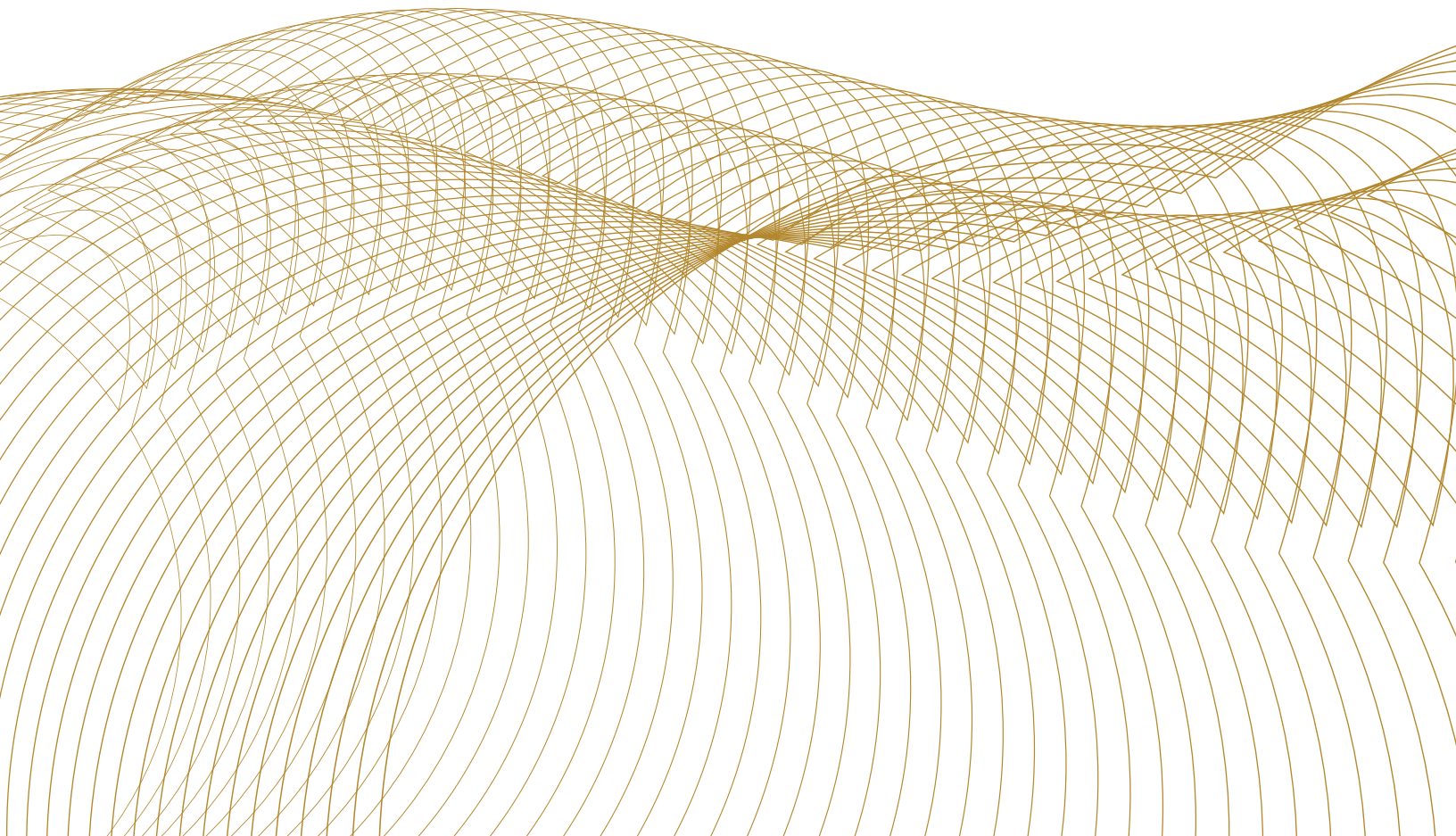
Most employees (70%) want a commitment from executive leadership to the volunteer activities that their organization sponsors. In fact, the main reason that employees do not participate is because they do not believe that volunteerism is a priority for leadership. Employees also want to play a decision-making role in the types of volunteer activities that their workplace offers, and they want a say in the issues, organizations and causes that it supports.

Top Reasons Employees DO NOT Participate in Workplace Volunteer Programs

Not a priority for my leadership	**53%**
Concern about taking time off	**50%**
Same people participate	**50%**
Not encouraged at my organization	**47%**

Findings

Employee Engagement

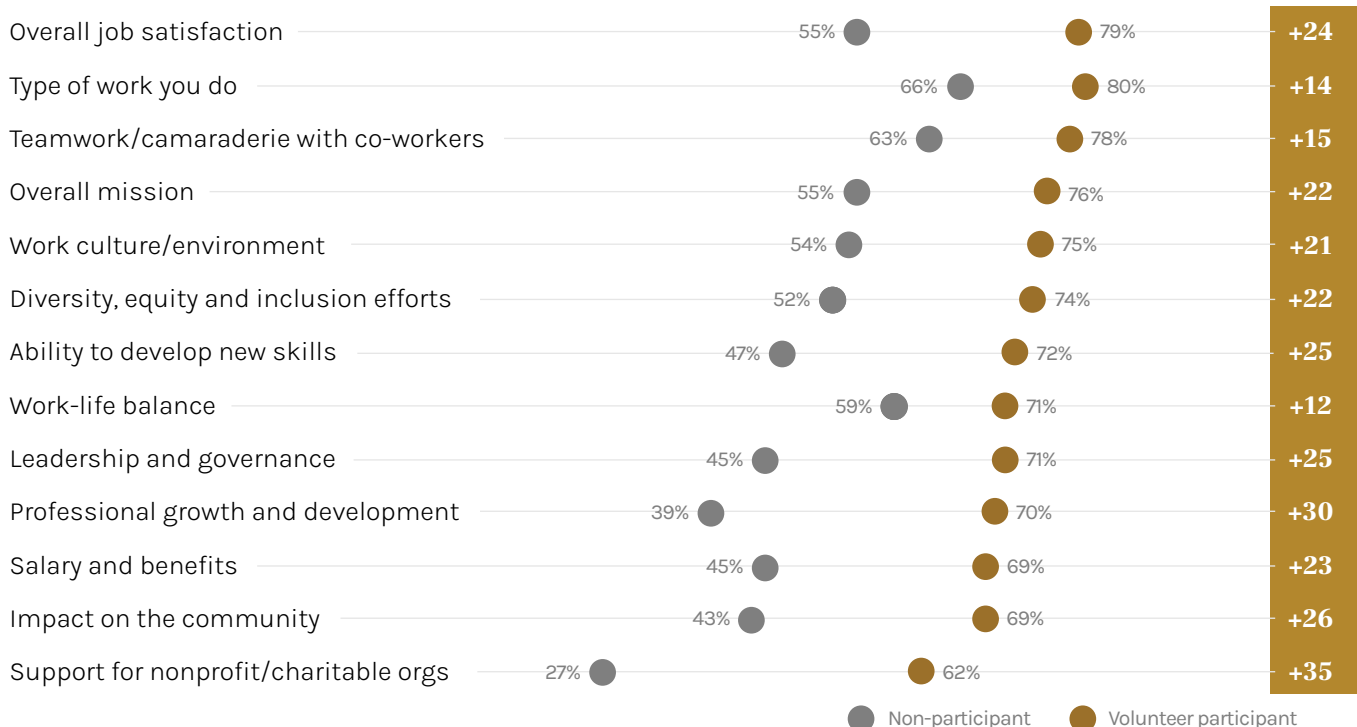## Workplace Volunteers Around the Globe Are More Professionally Satisfied

Across the countries surveyed, overall employee engagement remains a matter of concern. Workers continue to question their job choice, with only one in three (33%) reporting that they are very satisfied with their job and 41% saying that they are somewhat satisfied. Underscoring this lack of engagement is a sense of urgency to make a professional change: the majority of employees (57%) say that they are likely to look for another job within the next year.

This percentage is even higher among younger workers. Seven in 10 Gen Z employees (70%) — a population that includes individuals ages 18 to 26 and the newest and growing segment of the workforce — say that they are likely to look for another job in the next year. Millennials, i.e., those ages 27 to 42, are nearly as likely as their Gen Z colleagues to be job hunting (65%). In particular, those in the information technology and financial services industries skew higher in this regard, with job-seeking rates at 74% and 61%, respectively.

Volunteers Are More Satisfied with Their Work Life

% Who Say They Are Satisfied with Each Aspect of Work Life   **Difference***

Aspect	Non-participant	Volunteer participant	Difference*
Overall job satisfaction	55%	79%	+24
Type of work you do	66%	80%	+14
Teamwork/camaraderie with co-workers	63%	78%	+15
Overall mission	55%	76%	+22
Work culture/environment	54%	75%	+21
Diversity, equity and inclusion efforts	52%	74%	+22
Ability to develop new skills	47%	72%	+25
Work-life balance	59%	71%	+12
Leadership and governance	45%	71%	+25
Professional growth and development	39%	70%	+30
Salary and benefits	45%	69%	+23
Impact on the community	43%	69%	+26
Support for nonprofit/charitable orgs	27%	62%	+35

● Non-participant   ● Volunteer participant

Due to rounding, calculations in the "Difference" column for some queries may appear one percentage point either less or more than the difference between "non-participant" and "volunteer participant" data displayed in the graph.

Employee Engagement, continued

On the question of overall job satisfaction, nearly eight in 10 employees who volunteer through their organization (79%) say that they are satisfied in contrast to 55% of non-volunteers, a 24-point difference. When asked about their satisfaction with different aspects of their job, differences between volunteers and non-volunteers persist, primarily when it comes to:

- **Opportunities for professional growth and development**: the difference between volunteers and non-volunteers is more than 30 points (70% versus 39%).
- **Ability to develop new skills**: the difference between the two groups is 25 points (72% versus 47%).
- **Organizational leadership and governance**: the difference between these employee groups is more than 25 points (71% versus 45%).

In addition, a Net Promoter Score ("NPS") helps evaluate positive word-of-mouth for an organization by asking employees how likely they are to recommend it to others as a place to work. Survey findings reveal that NPS among workplace volunteers is twice that among employees in general (+20 versus +10).

Workplace volunteers are twice as likely to recommend their organization to jobseekers.

Net Promoter Scores

Volunteers **+20**

Non-Volunteers **-24**

All Employees **+10**

-100   100
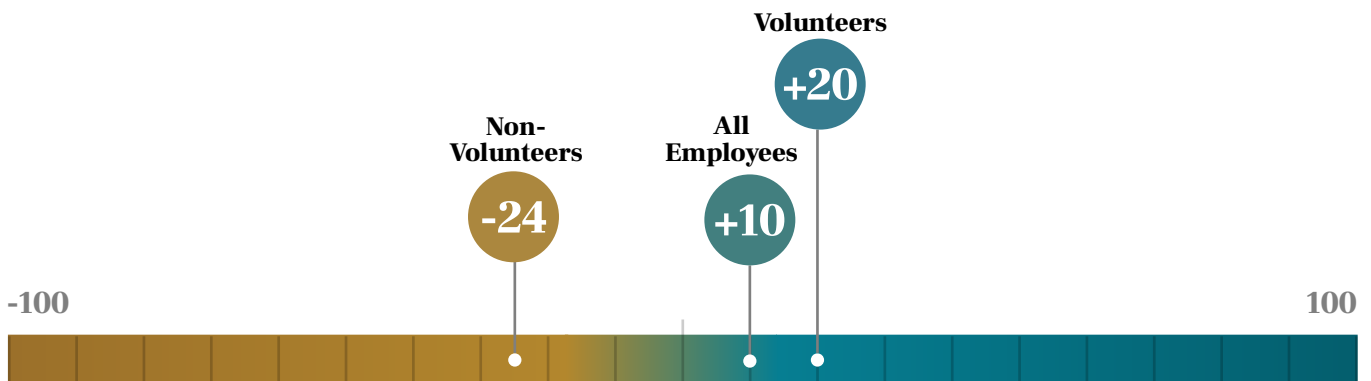
In their own words…

To build on the quantitative survey findings, 25 workplace volunteers each participated in an hourlong, semi-structured interview to pressure-test survey findings with employees' perspectives and experiences in their own voice. They discussed at length how workplace volunteer programs influence their mindset, level of job engagement and feelings about their organization.

"[Volunteering] has an intangible benefit that is strong. Employees do the same thing every day. It's mundane, so volunteering breaks it up a little bit psychologically. Helping people in the city that really need the help… And it builds goodwill within the company — employees seeing us as a caring institution. And there are individual benefits of helping people; it lifts spirits. It's hard to quantify. Some argue it takes away from work, but I don't look at it that way."

– U.S. Interviewee, Construction/ Development Sector

"Once the employee is engaged in the company, they can sustain more. You can encourage your employees to grow [and] learn through volunteering. They can go and join [for example] the Turkey Relief Fund. They can volunteer [and] the company can sponsor on their behalf or pay for their travel. They will go, and the goodwill of the company would be encouraged or promoted to them and in that particular country."

– UAE Interviewee, Conglomerate

"As part of the team, I feel like I'm part of something that gives back to society. If you are a person looking to join a company, you see they do care; they're not just a corporate company. You feel like you are part of a community."

– U.K. Interviewee, Travel Sector

"To give back to society, you get mental satisfaction, you are more engaged [and] you feel better about your company and yourself."

– India Interviewee, Media/Publishing Sector

"For an employee, it is powerful and inspires pride that they work for a company like that. When I have extra, I give. It is aligned with my values, so it is satisfying to work there."
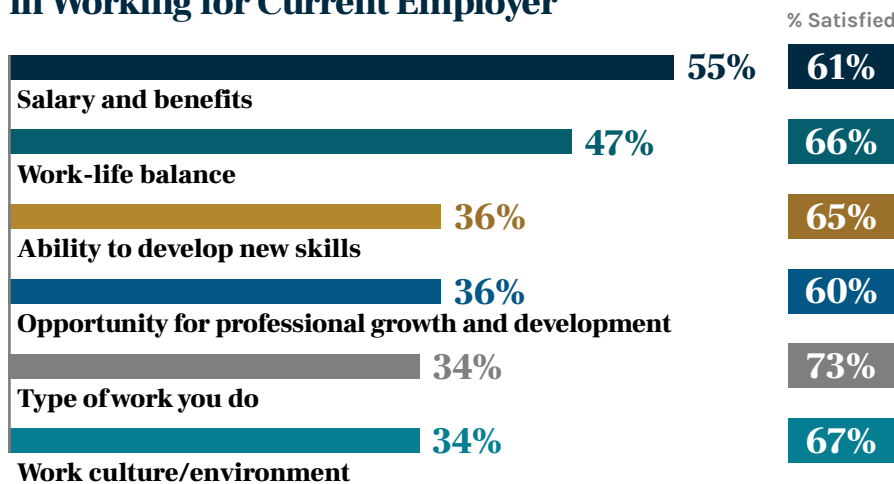
– Singapore Interviewee, Retail Sector

Professional Skills

Workplace Volunteer Programs Strengthen Employees' Capabilities

Jobseekers evaluate many factors when determining where they will work next. As part of this study, those who joined their organization within the past three years were asked to think about what interested them in working for their current employer. After salary and benefits and work-life balance, over one-third (36%) say that they accepted their position because they expected opportunities to grow and develop professionally as well as to acquire new skills. Still, they have been less satisfied with their professional growth since joining their organization.

The good news is that employees at all levels recognize the potential of workplace volunteer programs in helping them attain these goals. Moreover, they understand that volunteering can yield positive benefits not just for themselves, but also for their employer. When asked about the impact of workplace volunteering, they say that it has a positive impact on their capacity for teamwork (73%), yields personal fulfillment (71%), supports positive organizational reputation (71%), lifts employee morale (69%), and promotes their organization's mission and values (69%).

Top Reasons Recent Hires Were Interested in Working for Current Employer

% Satisfied

Reason	%	% Satisfied
Salary and benefits	55%	61%
Work-life balance	47%	66%
Ability to develop new skills	36%	65%
Opportunity for professional growth and development	36%	60%
Type of work you do	34%	73%
Work culture/environment	34%	67%

Professional Skills, continued

Impacts of Workplace Volunteer Programs

Good for Employees

Teamwork/camaraderie — **73%**

Personal fulfillment — **71%**

Work culture/environment — **67%**

Professional growth and development — **64%**

Job satisfaction — **62%**

Career advancement — **52%**

Good for Both

Employee morale — **69%**

Development of new skills — **66%**

Diversity, equity and inclusion efforts — **66%**

Onboarding new employees — **54%**

Good for the Organization

Organization's reputation — **71%**

Showing my organization cares — **70%**

Promoting the organization's mission and values — **69%**

Leadership and governance — **62%**

Recruiting new employees — **52%**
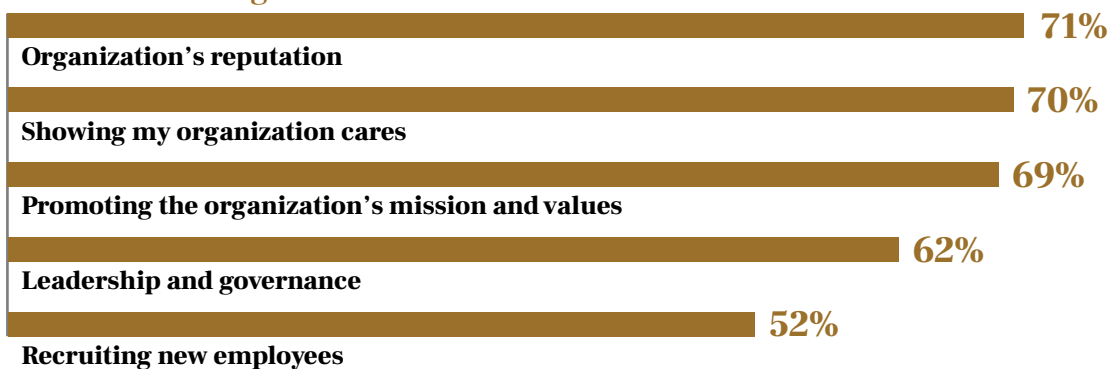
Professional Skills, continued

The survey also probed specific skills generally deemed important in the workplace. Employees were asked to review and assess a list of 26 skills based on three dimensions:

1. *Which of these skills are you most interested in developing or practicing at work?*

2. *Which do you think are most important and valued by your employer?*

3. *Which skills do you feel you develop through workplace volunteer efforts?*

Four skills reside at the nexus of what employees want, what they think that employers value and what volunteerism helps develop: teamwork, responsibility, communication and problem-solving. Interestingly, these are some of the same skills that global enterprises like Deloitte and PwC say that their youngest COVID-era hires struggle to develop today at work.[15] It should also be noted that communication and teamwork made LinkedIn's "2023 Most In-Demand Skills" list.[16]

In addition, employees want to practice several skills that they neither think necessarily connect with workplace volunteerism nor believe that their employer especially values: project management, critical thinking and creativity. These perceived deficits should prompt organizations to consider volunteer programs that afford these skill-building opportunities.

Volunteerism Develops
Kindness, Empathy, Collaboration, Respect for different people

Valued by All + Volunteerism Develops
Teamwork, Responsibility, Communication, Problem-Solving

Employer Values
Time management, Commitment

Employees Want to Develop
Leadership, Critical thinking, Project management, Confidence, Creativity

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15. Pandemic-era Graduates Struggle with Teamwork, Say Deloitte and PwC, *Financial Times*

16. LinkedIn 2023 Most In-Demand Skills: Learn the Skills Companies Need Most, February 20, 2023

Professional Skills, continued

Finally, workers consider some "soft" skills like kindness, empathy and respect for others to be volunteer outcomes, but they do not necessarily draw connections between these skills and their work and professional development. Instead, those interviewed describe these skills as part of their personal growth. This disconnect underscores an opportunity to reposition skills like kindness, empathy and respect for others as imperative for collaboration and workplace connectivity as well as potential alleviators of loneliness. By promoting employees' personal development and emotional learning, organizations can encourage the capabilities necessary to make teams work. Concurrently, colleagues who collectively strive to achieve a shared mission in volunteering can feel empowered by their joint desire to engage with one another at work and solve problems together.

"

We have a lot of younger team members who, it might be their first job, [and volunteering] can encourage them to try something different … A young person can go into a volunteer job and say, 'Here you go, do this,' and as they start to see what is unfolding, they can realize they need to speed it up or they can assign roles to get something done. [This is] delegating. They can see if someone isn't so great and figure out why they are struggling. [As a result, they are] learning kindness [and] leadership."

– U.K. Interviewee, Travel/Tourism Sector

A Closer Look at the Newest Employees: Gen Z

Most Gen Z employees entered the workforce during the tumultuous pandemic years. This has had a profound impact on their ability to forge connections with colleagues, access mentoring and guidance, and learn critical social and emotional skills. It is no surprise that throughout the survey, this generation presents itself as an outlier, expressing needs and motivations that differ from those of older workers. As they become the larger percentage of the workforce, any discussion about recruitment, engagement, retention and establishing best practices for workplace volunteer programs should pay close attention to this group.

Beginning with job recruitment, Gen Z workers are significantly more interested than other employees globally in employment opportunities that allow them to develop new skills (42% versus 36%). Behind salary and benefits (59%) and work-life balance (45%), the chance to develop new skills tops their list of motivators for joining an organization.

In fact, Gen Z employees are the only age cohort whose primary motivation to volunteer is the opportunity to learn new skills. The data show that 61% say that the ability to learn new skills perfectly describes their reason for volunteering in contrast to 47% for all employees. The skills that they

> " For those early in their career, it's more important. You build stakeholder management; you get to interact with all sorts of different people. It's really good exposure."

– U.K. Gen Z Interviewee, Financial Services Sector

most want to develop — i.e., those that they believe make them stand out from their peers — are confidence (14%), responsibility (13%) and time management (13%).

In addition, this group is more likely than others to describe career advancement as a benefit of volunteerism (64%). They are also more motivated to volunteer because it makes them feel part of a team (56%), and they are more likely to say workplace volunteering has a positive impact on teamwork and camaraderie (78%).

When asked which volunteer causes they favor, Gen Z workers express significantly more interest than employees overall in education (26% versus 20%), youth development (22% versus 17%), and mental health and crisis intervention (24% versus 21%). One deterrent to participating in workplace volunteer programs among Gen Z employees is time away from work. More than half (56%) are concerned about taking time off during the workday compared to 50% among employees overall.

This group is also the outlier when choosing how they want their employer to acknowledge their volunteerism. Given a choice between praise and branded organizational merchandise, only this cohort chooses merchandise (48%). This is almost a 10-point difference from workers overall (39%).
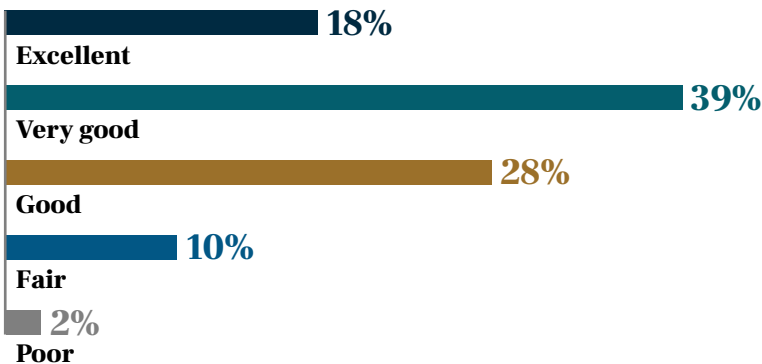
Maximizing the Value of Workplace Volunteer Programs

This research is intended to offer insights into how organizations can design and deliver workplace volunteer programs that maximize outcomes for workers and the nonprofits that they support. By exploring employees' opinions on the volunteer activities in which they participate, understanding what motivates their engagement, honoring their choice and voice, reimagining how to acknowledge their service and reducing perceived barriers to participation, organizations can implement the kinds of workplace volunteer programs that add even greater value to those who participate in them and the populations that benefit from their service.

The Need to Elevate Workplace Volunteer Programs from Good to Great

Only 18% of all survey respondents say that their workplace volunteer program is "excellent." So how do organizations elevate their volunteer programs from good to great? The survey asked respondents to reflect on this query. Those who perceive their organization's program

as "excellent" describe it as maintaining clear priorities, having the support of executive leadership and demonstrating sustained support for the same organizations or causes. In contrast, those who rank their program poorly say that it lacks structure and commitment from leadership. As one respondent put it, "We do not have a concrete process or target organizations to support. The arrangement is rather casual. Due to the nature of our business in aerospace and defense, we do not think employee volunteer programs are a priority."

Leading with Purpose

Motivating employees to volunteer requires designing and delivering programs that they not only consider worthy of their time and effort, but that also align with their core motivations. Altruism is the biggest driver of participation, with a large majority of employees indicating that volunteering gives them a sense of purpose (95%), fulfills their need to give back (94%) and allows them to use their talents to help others (95%).

Additional findings illuminate what it means to employees to lead with purpose. For example, 71% say that it has a positive impact on their feeling of personal fulfillment, and 69% believe that it promotes their organization's mission and values. The top reason employees say that they participate in workplace volunteer programs is the opportunity to help those less fortunate: nearly all respondents (96%) agree with the statement, "I am thankful for what I have and want to help others." This sense of gratitude is consistent across income levels — from the lowest to highest earners — in each of the countries surveyed.

Workplace Volunteer Program Rating

Excellent — 18%
Very good — 39%
Good — 28%
Fair — 10%
Poor — 2%

Maximizing the Value of Workplace Volunteer Programs, continued

Top Reasons Why Employees Participate in Workplace Volunteer Programs

I am thankful for what I have and want to help others — 96%

It gives me a sense of purpose — 95%

Leadership Role Modeling
In employees' view, the importance of leadership involvement in workplace volunteer programs cannot be overstated. It emerged as the primary reason employees might choose *not* to get involved with workplace volunteer programs. In fact, more than half of survey respondents (53%) say that leadership not making it a priority is a reason not to participate in their organization's volunteer activities.

Top Reasons Employees DO NOT Participate in Workplace Volunteer Programs

Not a priority for my leadership — 53%

Concern about taking time off — 50%

Same people participate — 50%

Not encouraged at my organization — 47%

Overall, 70% say that leadership's participation is imperative to the success of workplace volunteer programs. In the follow-up interviews, workers explained that programs feel "authentic" and "important" if their leadership believes in them. In their perspective, leadership support for workplace volunteerism should be evident through regular communication, personal participation or a combination thereof.

The second most frequent reason cited for not participating in workplace volunteer programs is a concern about taking time off during the workday. One in two respondents (50%) say that this deters their participation, and this is likely tied to feelings about whether leadership supports employee volunteerism. Moreover, younger workers express this concern more than others, with 56% of Gen Z respondents and 52% of Millennials raising the issue.

An additional reason for not participating suggests volunteerism burnout: four in 10 (41%) say that they have done it enough and now it is someone else's turn. Half of respondents (50%) say that they do not participate because the same people always volunteer.

Employees Want Ownership
In many of the workplaces discussed in survey findings and interview data, the current workforce spans four generations: Gen Z (ages 18 to 26), Millennials (ages 27 to 42), Gen X (ages 43 to 58) and

> "Goodwill [from volunteering] represents a feeling of welcomeness, belonging, caring [and connotes] that we don't just care about profits. It helps employees feel better about their job. I work for a company that believes in volunteering and encourages us to do so. I initiated this, so it's more than a project; it's part of my life. I believe in it. If I didn't volunteer, I would have a void in my heart. It [not only] makes me a better person, but also a better executive."

– U.S. Interviewee, Construction/Development Sector

Baby Boomers (ages 59 to 77). With that comes different priorities and desires. A workplace volunteer program that addresses all employees' needs and interests might not be possible, so employers should consider a variety of options to engage workers in volunteer activities. Nearly eight in 10 survey respondents (79%) request this, and almost as many (72%) say that they would like to choose from a variety of volunteer opportunities that span a range of issues and/or causes.

To achieve the right balance of offerings, 72% say that it is important to give employees a say in determining the types of volunteer activities that organizations make available, and 73% desire a voice in deciding the types of charitable organizations and causes that their organization supports.

Important Factors in Creating BEST Workplace Volunteer Programs

79%
Variety in activities

73%
Input on causes

72%
Variety in causes

72%
Input on activities

While the notion of ownership matters to employees when it comes to workplace volunteer programs, they are equally interested in myriad engagement activities: 40% express interest in person-to-person volunteering such as serving meals at a food bank; 39% desire professional skills-based volunteering like job training, mentoring and donating professional services; 36% enjoy team fundraising events such as walks, runs and bicycle rides; and 36% prefer community volunteering activities like beach cleanups and homebuilding projects.

Interestingly, executives and senior employees as well as younger workers are most interested in professional, skills-based opportunities. While those more experienced enjoy practically applying their expertise when doing good, their

70% of employees say it is important to recognize volunteer participation.

more junior colleagues can gain needed skills development.

Recognition, Not Requirements
According to the findings, employees want to be noticed and appreciated for their willingness to give back to the community where they work. While organizations can recognize these efforts in various ways, 70% of respondents agree that acknowledgment matters. They also offer suggestions for how their employers can make this happen, including recognition during performance reviews (40%), gifts of organizational "swag" such as tee shirts and coffee mugs (39%), and callouts in organizational communications (32%).

An important caveat, however, is that workers do not want the appreciation and recognition that they receive to be perceived as rewards for volunteering. They point out that opinions can quickly sour if employees feel that they are either being forced to volunteer — or "voluntold" — or if motivations for volunteering shift from altruism to simply doing what could be considered necessary to climb the career

Top Ways Employees Should Be Recognized for Participation in Workplace Volunteer Programs

40%
Include employee volunteer participation in performance reviews

39%
Give volunteer participants promotional giveaways

32%
Feature volunteer participants in an annual report or other external communications

27%
Acknowledge/thank people who have participated in organization-wide communications
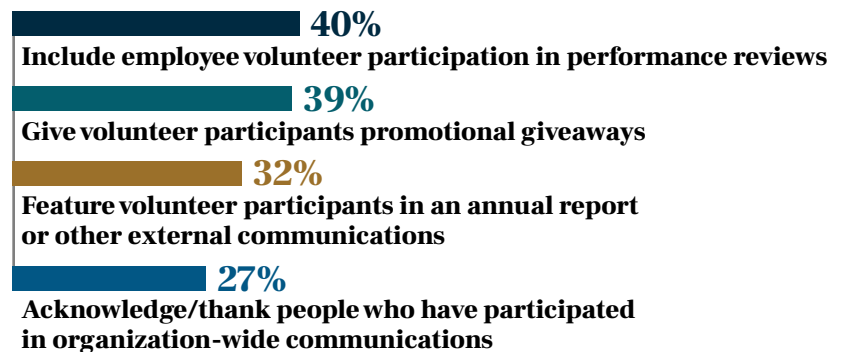
Parting Thoughts from Lee Fabiaschi

When Michelle first shared the idea for this study with me in late 2021, we had a collective lightbulb moment. As corporate philanthropy practitioners, we see the intuitive links between employee volunteerism, professional and personal development, workplace and community impact. We were thrilled to commission what we believe is this first-of-its-kind research with our thought partner, Edge Research.

At Ares, we strive to create industry leading Ares in Motion ("AIM") activities for our employees and serve as philanthropic thought leaders, sharing insights and ideas with our peers and community partners. Being driven by data and measurement, here are just a few ways we are implementing the study findings to enhance our programming:

Choice and Voice: As an employee-directed program, "choice and voice" has always been a key tenet of AIM activities. The employee-led committees in each region where we operate globally ensure that the organizations we support and activities we sponsor tap into the passions of our local staff and meet the needs of their communities. We see the returns in both the number of employees who participate and their commitment to these initiatives.

Leadership Role Modeling: The survey highlights the significance of leadership involvement. To put that feedback into action, we asked Ares Partners to champion and participate in our 2023 Summer of Service by signing up for at least one volunteer opportunity and allowing us to promote the opportunity using their name to generate interest in it. We were inspired when nearly half of the firm's Partners agreed to participate in at least one volunteer event. The employee response was also tremendous: registration for all Summer of Service events was either full or required a waiting list.

Sustained Engagement with Nonprofits: While we are delighted with employees' enthusiasm for AIM, there are always opportunities for improvement. Historically, our AIM activities have largely been episodic. Using the survey results, we are incorporating building sustained engagement opportunities for Ares employees through volunteer activities with nonprofits that receive grants from the Ares Charitable Foundation. This will also help better align employees' talents and professional skills with the needs of the nonprofits that we support.

Tailored Opportunities for Gen Z: We are excited by the finding that reveals how much Gen Z sees volunteering as a way to develop personally and professionally, and we are inspired by their interest in honing leadership skills through volunteer efforts. In 2022, we piloted a nonprofit board training and placement program for experienced professionals in collaboration with Cause Strategy Partners. This initiative aligns with Ares employees' desire to give back in ways that go beyond firm-sponsored volunteering and leverage their interests and skills. Participants in this initiative receive rigorous training in board governance best practices as well as one-on-one support to prepare for board placement. The success of the pilot and our Gen Z employees' ardent interest to participate led us to expand enrollment to include junior professionals. The new program will offer training similar to the board governance program, with additional resources and support for Gen Z colleagues to successfully support nonprofit organizations with their time and talent early in their career.

We are hopeful that this research inspires renewed energy among our industry peers and provides useful data to support their initiatives. We also hope that it helps them innovate strategies to refresh and evolve their programs.

Finally, we cannot thank our amazing nonprofit partners enough for the work that they do each day to support the populations that most depend on them. We hope that these research findings offer insights into the design and co-creation of industry leading programs to support their mission.

Thank you for reading *Philanthropy, Purpose and Professional Development: Why Workplace Volunteer Programs Matter*. As the research demonstrates, connecting professional and personal development with purpose allows workplace volunteer programs to return significant benefits to employees, community partners and the organizations that support them. We trust that those who leverage these research findings will graciously share their lessons learned as each of us strives to continuously enhance our impact.

Lee Fabiaschi

Lee Fabiaschi
Vice President, Employee Engagement and Community Impact

Methodology

Edge Research surveyed nationally representative samples of 5,150 full-time employees across five countries to ascertain the effects of workplace volunteer programs on employees. Participants represented a range of industries, titles, ages and geographies, and were selected via commercial online research panels. This online survey was administered from January 20 to February 17, 2023. Among the respondents were:

| **1,024**
individuals
from India | **1,012**
individuals
from Singapore | **1,011**
individuals
from the UAE | **1,071**
individuals
from the U.K. | **1,032**
individuals
from the U.S. |

To elucidate survey findings and probe them more deeply, Edge Research conducted 60-minute, in-depth interviews with 25 workplace volunteers across the five countries.

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

PANEL N=5150

Audience	Total Sample Size
India	1024
Singapore	1012
UAE	1011
UK	1071
US	1032

Note: Some question numbers are not in sequential order because of updates made during the programming stage of survey development.

SCREENING CRITERIA (PANEL ONLY)

Q1-17 PANEL ONLY

1. In what language would you like to take this survey?
   1   English
   2   Hindi

2. Just to make sure we have a representative sample, what is your age?) _____
MIN=0; MAX=99. TERMINATE IF <18. INCLUDE "Prefer not to answer"

3. **IF Q02=1:** Can you confirm that you are 18 years of age or older?
   1   Yes
   2   No   **TERMINATE**

4. In which country do you live?
DROP DOWN LIST
   1   India
   2   Singapore
   3   United Arab Emirates
   4   United Kingdom
   5   United States
   6   Other   **TERMINATE**

5. **IF COUNTRY (Q04)=INDIA:** In what state/union territory do you live?
   1   Andaman and Nicobar Islands
   2   Andhra Pradesh
   3   Arunachal Pradesh
   4   Assam
   5   Bihar
   6   Chandigarh
   7   Chhattisgarh

8   Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu
9   Delhi
10   Goa
11   Gujarat
12   Haryana
13   Himachal Pradesh
14   Jammu and Kashmir
15   Jharkhand
16   Karnataka
17   Kerala
18   Ladakh
19   Lakshadweep
20   Madhya Pradesh
21   Maharashtra
22   Manipur
23   Meghalaya
24   Mizoram
25   Nagaland
26   Odisha
27   Puducherry
28   Punjab
29   Rajasthan
30   Sikkim
31   Tamil Nadu
32   Telangana
33   Tripura
34   Uttar Pradesh
35   Uttarakhand
36   West Bengal
37   Other

6. IF COUNTRY (Q04)=SINGAPORE:
In what region do you live?
   1   Central
   2   East
   3   North
   4   North-East
   5   West
   6   Other

7. IF COUNTRY (Q04)=UAE:
In what emirate do you live?
   1   Abu Dhabi
   2   Dubai
   3   Sharjah
   4   Ajman
   5   Umm Al-Quwain
   6   Fujairah
   7   Other

8. IF COUNTRY (Q04)=UK:
Do you live in… ?
   1   England
   2   Scotland
   3   Wales
   4   Northern Ireland
   5   Other   **TERMINATE**

9. IF Q08=1 (ENGLAND):
And do you live in… ?
   1   Greater London
   2   South East
   3   South West
   4   East Anglia
   5   West Midlands
   6   East Midlands
   7   Yorkshire and the Humber
   8   North West
   9   North East
   10   Other

Appendix A: Survey Instrument, continued

10. IF COUNTRY (Q04)=US:
In what state do you live?
[SHOW DROPDOWN MENU]

11. Do you describe yourself as a man, a woman, or in some other way?
1 Man
2 Woman
3 Some other way
4 Prefer not to answer

ASK Q12 and Q13 ON SAME PAGE:
12. IF COUNTRY (Q04)=US: Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?
1 Yes
2 No
3 Prefer not to answer

13. IF COUNTRY (Q04)=US: Which of the following best describes your race?
Select all that apply.
1 American Indian
2 Asian or Pacific Islander
3 Black/African American
4 White/Caucasian
5 Other
6 Prefer not to answer

14. What is your current employment status? *If more than one employment status applies, please select your primary source of income.*
1 Employed full-time
2 Employed part-time **TERMINATE**
3 Self-employed, freelancer or independent contractor
        TERMINATE
4 Own your own business
5 Student   **TERMINATE**
6 Homemaker   **TERMINATE**
7 Retired   **TERMINATE**
8 Unemployed, looking for work **TERMINATE**
9 Other   **TERMINATE**

15. Approximately how many people are employed at your organization at all locations? *Please use your best guess.*
1 1 employee (yourself)
2 2-19 employees
3 20-49 employees
4 50-99 employees
5 100-249 employees
6 250-499 employees
7 500-999 employees
8 1000-4999 employees
9 5000-9999 employees
10 10,0000+ employees
11 Not sure   **ALLOW UP TO 50/ COUNTRY NOT SURE**

16. In which of the following industries do you work?
1 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining
2 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
3 Construction or Building
4 Finance and Insurance Services
        [MONITOR: GOAL IS 100+/COUNTRY]
5 Government and Public Administration (e.g., local, state, or federal government)
6 Health Care or Medicine
7 Higher Education (e.g., colleges, universities)
8 Hospitality, Hotel, Food Services, or Restaurant
9 Information Services, Data Processing, or Software
10 K-12 Education
11 Law Enforcement, Fire Department, or EMT (first responder)
12 Management/Business
13 Manufacturing
14 Media and Telecommunications
15 Military
16 Not-for-Profit Organizations (e.g., charitable organizations, unions, and trade associations)
17 Professional, Scientific, or Technical Services (including Consulting)
18 Real Estate, Rental, or Leasing
19 Retail
20 Transportation/Ride Sharing
21 Other type of for-profit company (please specify: _____)
22 Other (please specify: _____)

17. How would you describe your job level at your company/organization?
1 Entry-level
2 Mid-level
3 Senior-level
4 Executive
5 None of these
6 Not sure

JOB INFORMATION

18. How long have you worked at your current company/organization?
1 Less than 6 months
2 6 months to less than 1 year
3 1 year to less than 3 years
4 3 years to less than 5 years
5 5 years to less than 10 years
6 10 years to less than 20 years
7 20 years or more

19. How long have you been in the workforce?
1 Less than 6 months
2 6 months to less than 1 year
3 1 year to less than 3 years
4 3 years to less than 5 years
5 5 years to less than 10 years
6 10 years to less than 20 years
7 20 years or more

20. At how many jobs have you worked throughout your entire working life?

NUMERIC; MIN=1; MAX=999. SHOW OPTION FOR "Not sure"

21. How likely are you to look for another job outside your company/organization in the next 12 months?
1. Extremely likely
2. Pretty likely
3. Somewhat likely
4. Somewhat unlikely
5. Very unlikely
6. Not sure

Appendix A: Survey Instrument, continued

22. **IF HIRED IN LAST 3 YEARS (Q20=1-3):** Which of the following impacted your interest in working for your current employer?
Select all that apply.

RANDOMIZE
  1   Overall mission
  2   Diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts
  3   Work culture/environment
  4   Leadership and governance
  5   Type of work you do
  6   Salary and benefits
  7   Work-life balance
  8   Opportunity for professional growth and development
  9   Ability to develop new skills
  10 Teamwork/camaraderie with co-workers
  11 Support for non-profit or charitable organizations
  12 Impact on the community
  13 Other **[SPECIFY, ANCHOR]**
  14 None of these **[ANCHOR, EXCLUSIVE]**

23. When was the last time you got a promotion?
  1   Within the last 6 months
  2   6 months to less than 1 year
  3   1 year to less than 3 years
  4   3 years to less than 5 years
  5   5 years to less than 10 years
  6   10+ years
  7   Never
  8   Not sure

24. What percent of time do you work…? *Your best estimate is fine.*
  1   Virtually/remotely _____%
  2   In-person _____%
  MUST ADD TO 100%

25. Overall, how satisfied are you with your job?
  1   Very satisfied
  2   Somewhat satisfied
  3   In the middle
  4   Somewhat dissatisfied
  5   Very dissatisfied
  6   Not sure

26. How satisfied are you with each of the following at your company/organization?
  1   Very satisfied
  2   Somewhat satisfied
  3   In the middle
  4   Somewhat dissatisfied
  5   Very dissatisfied
  6   Not sure

RANDOMIZE
  a. Overall mission
  b. Diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts
  c. Work culture/environment
  d. Leadership and governance
  e. Type of work you do
  f. Salary and benefits
  g. Work-life balance
  h. Opportunity for professional growth and development
  i. Ability to develop new skills
  j. Teamwork/camaraderie with co-workers
  k. Support for non-profit or charitable organizations
  l. Impact on the community

27. How likely are you to recommend your company/organization to others as a place to work on a scale from 0 to 10?
SHOW SCALE HORIZONTALLY ON COMPUTER
  0   Not likely at all to recommend
  1
  2
  3
  4
  5
  6
  7
  8
  9
  10 Definitely would recommend
  11 Not sure

28. How much do you agree with each of the following statements about your work?
  1   Strongly agree
  2   Somewhat agree
  3   In the middle
  4   Somewhat disagree
  5   Strongly disagree
  6   Not sure/not applicable

RANDOMIZE
  a. Someone cares about me
  b. Someone encourages my development
  c. I have opportunities to learn and grow
  d. My company/organization shares my values
  e. My company/organization cares about the communities where we operate

29. **SPLIT SAMPLE A:** Which of the following skills are **most important**/valued by your company/organization?
Select up to 5.

RANDOMIZE
  1   Accountability
  2   Adaptability
  3   Collaboration
  4   Commitment
  5   Communication
  6   Confidence
  7   Conflict resolution
  8   Creativity
  9   Critical thinking
  10 Curiosity
  11 Empathy
  12 Entrepreneurship
  13 Respect for different types of people
  14 Kindness
  15 Leadership
  16 Listening
  17 Organization
  18 Presentation skills
  19 Problem solving
  20 Project management
  21 Resilience
  22 Responsibility
  23 Risk-taking
  24 Self-awareness
  25 Teamwork
  26 Time management
  27 Other **[SPECIFY, ANCHOR]**
  28 None of the above/not sure **[ANCHOR, EXCLUSIVE]**

Appendix A: Survey Instrument, continued

30. **SPLIT SAMPLE B:** Which of the following skills are you most interested in developing and/or practicing at work? *Select up to 5.*

RANDOMIZE
1. Accountability
2. Adaptability
3. Collaboration
4. Commitment
5. Communication
6. Confidence
7. Conflict resolution
8. Creativity
9. Critical thinking
10. Curiosity
11. Empathy
12. Entrepreneurship
13. Respect for different types of people
14. Kindness
15. Leadership
16. Listening
17. Organization
18. Presentation skills
19. Problem solving
20. Project management
21. Resilience
22. Responsibility
23. Risk-taking
24. Self-awareness
25. Teamwork
26. Time management
27. Other **[SPECIFY, ANCHOR]**
28. None of the above/not sure **[ANCHOR, EXCLUSIVE]**

31. Which **one** term below do you think best describes the types of skills listed in the previous question?

RANDOMIZE
1. Social and emotional skills
2. Soft skills
3. Interpersonal skills
4. Life skills
5. Professional development
6. Professional skills
7. Social skills
8. Skills
9. Emotional intelligence
10. Character development
11. 21st Century skills
12. Talent development

13. Other **[SPECIFY, ANCHOR]**
14. None of the above **[ANCHOR, EXCLUSIVE]**

> **ATTITUDES AND VALUES ABOUT EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS**

[PUT Q32 and Q33 ON SAME PAGE]

32. Some employers encourage their employees to support charitable organizations and causes through employee **giving** programs (e.g., donation matching programs, charitable giving incentive programs, and workplace fundraisers). How important is that to you personally?
1. Extremely important
2. Pretty important
3. Somewhat important
4. Not too important
5. Not important at all
6. Not sure

33. Some employers encourage their employees to support charitable organizations and causes through employee **volunteer** programs (e.g., paid time off to volunteer during the workday and company-organized volunteer opportunities). How important is that to you personally?
1. Extremely important
2. Pretty important
3. Somewhat important
4. Not too important
5. Not important at all
6. Not sure

34. Does your current employer have employee giving and/or volunteer programs?
1. Yes, employee giving programs
2. Yes, employee volunteer programs
3. Both employee giving and volunteer programs
4. No
5. Not sure

35. Would you say that employee giving is …
1. A top priority at your company
2. An important priority (but not the top)
3. A secondary priority
4. Not a priority at all
5. Not sure

36. Would you say that employee volunteering is …
1. A top priority at your company
2. An important priority (but not the top)
3. A secondary priority
4. Not a priority at all
5. Not sure

37. Which of the following have you personally done through your **current** employer? *Select all that apply.*

RANDOMIZE
1. Made a donation through payroll deduction
2. Made a donation where your employer matched the gift
3. Made a donation through a workplace fundraiser
4. Donated goods or services through your workplace
5. Other type of financial donation **[ANCHOR]**
6. None of the above **[ANCHOR, EXCLUSIVE]**
7. Not sure **[ANCHOR, EXCLUSIVE]**

Appendix A: Survey Instrument, continued

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 4px;">PARTICIPATION IN EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS</div>

The next few questions will focus on employee volunteer programs. These are company-organized volunteer opportunities, paid time off to volunteer during the workday, serving on a nonprofit board, attending charity events, etc.

SHOW Q38 AND 39 ON SAME PAGE
38. **IF Q34=2,3 (OFFER VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS):** In general, how would you describe the employee volunteer programs at your workplace?
   1   Excellent
   2   Very good
   3   Good
   4   Fair
   5   Poor
   6   Not sure

39. **IF Q34=2,3 (OFFER VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS):** And what makes you say that? **[PROGRAM FOR OPEN-END, OPTIONAL]**

40. **IF Q34=2,3 (OFFER VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS):** Does your employer allow you to participate in the employee volunteer program during your paid working hours?
   1   Yes
   2   No
   3   Not sure

41. There are many ways that employees can volunteer their time and talent. Which of the following have you done through your current workplace? *Select all that apply.*

RANDOMIZE
   1   Person-to-person volunteering, such as serving meals at a food bank, visiting the elderly at a nursing home, etc.
   2   Community volunteering, such as beach or park clean-ups, building homes or shelters, etc.
   3   Professional skills-based volunteering, such as providing job training or advice, mentoring, or giving professional services to someone in need, etc.
   4   Advocacy-based volunteering, such as raising awareness about or encouraging support for an issue that is of public interest
   5   Leadership volunteering, such as serving on a board or committee of a non-profit organization or charitable cause
   6   Team fundraising events, such as walks, runs, rides, etc.
   7   Other **[SPECIFY, ANCHOR]**
   8   None of the above/not sure **[ANCHOR]**

DEFINE AUDIENCE: IF Q41=1-7, VOLUNTEER PARTICIPANT=YES

42. And regardless of what you have done in the past, which of the following types of volunteering are you interested in doing through your workplace? *If you are not interested in any, please select that option below.*

RANDOMIZE
   1   Person-to-person volunteering, such as serving meals at a food bank, visiting the elderly at a nursing home, etc.
   2   Community volunteering, such as beach or park clean-ups, building homes or shelters, etc.
   3   Professional skills-based volunteering, such as providing job training or advice, mentoring, or giving professional services to someone in need, etc.
   4   Advocacy-based volunteering, such as raising awareness about or encouraging support for an issue that is of public interest
   5   Leadership volunteering, such as serving on a board or committee of a non-profit organization or charitable cause
   6   Team fundraising events, such as walks, runs, rides, etc.
   7   Other **[SPECIFY, ANCHOR]**
   8   I'm not interested in volunteering through my workplace **[ANCHOR]**

43. **[ASK IF VOLUNTEER PARTICIPANT=YES]** In the last 12 months, how many times have you volunteered through an employee volunteer program? *Your best estimate is fine.*
   _____ **MIN=0, MAX=999, SHOW OPTION FOR "Not sure"**

44. **[ASK IF VOLUNTEER PARTICIPANT=YES]** Is this amount of volunteering… ?
   1   More than you want to volunteer
   2   About the right amount
   3   Less than you want to volunteer
   4   Not sure

45. **[ASK IF Q43≠0 (HAVE VOLUNTEERED AT LEAST ONCE)]** What percent of these volunteer efforts have you done… ? *Your best estimate is fine.*
   1   Virtually/remotely _____%
   2   In-person _____%
   MUST ADD TO 100%

46. **[ASK IF VOLUNTEER PARTICIPANT=YES]** When was the last time you participated in an employee volunteer activity?
   1   Within the last month
   2   2-6 months ago
   3   6 months to a year ago
   4   1 year to 2 years ago
   5   2-5 years ago
   6   More than 5 years ago
   7   Not sure

Appendix A: Survey Instrument, continued

47. **[ASK IF VOLUNTEER PARTICIPANT=YES]** Which of the following best describes the types of non-profit or charitable causes you have volunteered with through an employee volunteer program? *Select all that apply.*

RANDOMIZE
1   Animal Rescue, Animal Shelter, Animal Protection
2   Arts, Culture, and Humanities
3   Education
4   Environmental Quality, Protection, and Beautification
5   Food and Nutrition
6   Health and Healthcare
7   Housing and Shelter
8   Human Services
9   International, Foreign Affairs, and National Security
10 Mental Health and Crisis Intervention
11 Public Advocacy and Social Impact
12 Public Safety, Disaster Preparedness, and Relief
13 Recreation and Sports
14 Youth Development
15 Organizations that fight hate, prejudice, and inequality
16 Other **[SPECIFY, ANCHOR]**
17 Not sure **[SPECIFY ANCHOR]**

48. Regardless of what you have done in the past, which of the following types of non-profit or charitable causes would you MOST like to support through an employee volunteer program? *Select up to 3.*

RANDOMIZE
1   Animal Rescue, Animal Shelter, Animal Protection
2   Arts, Culture, and Humanities
3   Education
4   Environmental Quality, Protection, and Beautification
5   Food and Nutrition
6   Health and Healthcare
7   Housing and Shelter
8   Human Services
9   International, Foreign Affairs, and National Security

10 Mental Health and Crisis Intervention
11 Public Advocacy and Social Impact
12 Public Safety, Disaster Preparedness, and Relief
13 Recreation and Sports
14 Youth Development
15 Organizations that fight hate, prejudice, and inequality
16 Other **[SPECIFY, ANCHOR]**
17 Not sure **[SPECIFY ANCHOR]**

49. **[ASK IF VOLUNTEER PARTICIPANT=YES]** Which best describes how you typically participate in employee volunteer efforts with a single organization?
1   You only volunteer with an organization once
2   You volunteer with the same organization regularly (e.g., on a monthly or quarterly basis)
3   You volunteer with the same organization occasionally when the organization needs you
4   You volunteer with the same organization once each year
5   Other **[SPECIFY]**
6   Not sure/not applicable

50. Regardless of what you have done in the past, which best describes how you WANT to participate in employee volunteer efforts with a single organization? *Select one.*
1   Only volunteer once with each organization
2   Volunteer regularly with the same organization (e.g., on a monthly or quarterly basis)
3   Volunteer occasionally with the same organization when the organization needs you
4   Volunteer with the same organization once each year
5   Other **[SPECIFY]**
6   Not sure/not applicable

53. Below please share the reasons why you have participated or would like to participate in employee volunteer programs. **[OPEN END, REQUIRED] SHOW BOX FOR "I don't want to participate"**

51. **ASK IF Q42≠8:** There are many different reasons that people participate in employee volunteering. How well do each of the following describe WHY you have or why you would like to participate in employee volunteer programs?
1   Describes perfectly
2   Describes somewhat
3   Does not describe
4   Not sure

RANDOMIZE FULL LIST TOGETHER, DON'T SHOW WORDS IN BRACKETS [PURPOSE]
a. It gives me a sense of purpose
b. I feel like I am making a difference
c. I feel a responsibility to give back
d. It allows me to live up to my religious values
e. I am thankful for what I have and want to help others
f. It shows that my company/organization cares
g. It allows me to use my strengths to help others

[EXPERIENCE]
h. I can learn new skills
i. I am exposed to new things
j. I can do something totally different than my job
k. It forces me out of my comfort zone
l. It's fun
m. It's easy
n. I get paid time off
o. I can do it during work hours
p. My family can participate

[RELATIONSHIPS]
q. I can network
r. I can meet new people
s. I can collaborate with people outside of my department or team

Appendix A: Survey Instrument, continued

t. I can bond with colleagues outside of the office
u. I can build relationships with clients
v. It makes me feel like I am part of a team
w. I can be a role model for others
x. It makes me look good to my boss or colleagues

52. **[ASK IF MORE THAN 1 "DESCRIBES PERFECTLY" IN Q51]** You said the following are reasons you have or would participate in employee volunteer programs. Which ONE is the MOST IMPORTANT reason for you to participate? *Select one.*
1 **SHOW ALL ITEMS FOR WHICH Q51=1 (DESCRIBES PERFECTLY)**
2 Other (Please specify) **[ANCHOR]**
3 Not sure **[ANCHOR]**

54. Below are some reasons that people have given for NOT participating in employee volunteer programs. How well do each of the following describe why you might NOT participate in employee volunteer programs?
1 Describes perfectly
2 Describes somewhat
3 Does not describe
4 Not sure

RANDOMIZE
a. It's not encouraged at my company/organization
b. It's not a priority for the leadership at my company/organization
c. **[SPLIT SAMPLE A]** I'm concerned about taking time off during the workday
d. **[SPLIT SAMPLE B]** I'm scared to be away from work
e. I don't feel like it really makes a difference
f. I don't feel connected to the issues or causes my company supports
g. I don't enjoy the types of volunteer activities my company sponsors
h. I don't feel like it is inclusive and welcoming

i. The same people always participate
j. I've done it enough and feel like it's time for others to participate
k. It's too much pressure
l. I'm just not interested in this

55. Are there any **other reasons** why you don't want to or cannot participate in employee volunteer programs? **[OPEN END, OPTIONAL]**

56. What impact, if any, do you think employee volunteer programs have/could have on each of the following at your company/organization?
1 Positive impact
2 No impact
3 Negative impact
4 Not sure

RANDOMIZE
a. Job satisfaction
b. Personal fulfillment
c. Professional growth and development
d. Development of new skills
e. Career advancement
f. Teamwork/camaraderie
g. Company/organization's reputation
h. Showing my company cares
i. Promoting the company's mission and values
j. Diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts
k. Work culture/environment
l. Leadership and governance
m. Recruiting new employees
n. Onboarding new employees
o. Employee morale

57. Which of the following skills do you think participation in employee volunteer programs helps develop? *Select all that apply.*

RANDOMIZE
1 Accountability
2 Adaptability
3 Collaboration
4 Commitment
5 Communication

6 Confidence
7 Conflict resolution
8 Creativity
9 Critical thinking
10 Curiosity
11 Empathy
12 Entrepreneurship
13 Respect for different types of people
14 Kindness
15 Leadership
16 Listening
17 Organization
18 Presentation skills
19 Problem solving
20 Project management
21 Resilience
22 Responsibility
23 Risk-taking
24 Self-awareness
25 Teamwork
26 Time management
27 Other **[SPECIFY, ANCHOR]**
28 None of the above/not sure **[ANCHOR, EXCLUSIVE]**

58. Think about creating the BEST employee volunteer program. How much of a priority should each of the following be in creating the BEST employee volunteer program?
1 A top priority
2 An important priority (but not the top)
3 A secondary priority
4 Not a priority at all
5 Not sure

RANDOMIZE
a. Employee input on the types of charitable organizations and causes the company supports
b. Employee input on the types of volunteer activities
c. A long-term commitment to one or more specific charitable organizations or causes
d. Alignment with the corporate mission and/or values
e. Offering a variety of ways to participate (e.g., different types of activities, different times of year, different lengths of time, etc.)

Appendix A: Survey Instrument, continued

f. Offering a variety of issues or causes to support
g. Participation from your boss or other leadership
h. Ability to measure/track the impact you personally make through your participation
i. Ability to measure/track the impact the company makes through its participation
j. Volunteer activities that make use of your professional skills and expertise
k. Recognizing employees for their participation
l. Easy and convenient
m. **[SPLIT SAMPLE A]** Paid time off during the workday to participate
n. **[SPLIT SAMPLE B]** Paid time to participate outside of the workday

59. In which of the following ways do you think employees should be recognized for their participation in employee volunteer programs? *Select all that apply.*

RANDOMIZE
1 **[SPLIT SAMPLE A]** Acknowledge/thank people who have participated in corporate-wide communications (e.g., list their names in newsletters, emails, website)
2 **[SPLIT SAMPLE B]** Company leadership personally acknowledges/thanks people who have participated
3 **[SPLIT SAMPLE C]** Have a party, dinner, ice-cream social, etc., for volunteer participants as a thank you
4 **[SPLIT SAMPLE D]** Company leadership hosts a party, dinner, ice-cream social, etc. for volunteer participants as a thank you
5 Include employee volunteer participation in performance reviews
6 Give volunteer participants promotional giveaways (e.g., t-shirt, tote bag, coffee mug)

7 Feature volunteer participants in an annual report or other external communications
8 Other (please specify) **[ANCHOR]**
9 I don't think employees need to be recognized **[ANCHOR, EXCLUSIVE]**
10 Not sure **[ANCHOR, EXCLUSIVE]**

60. What's the best way for your company/organization to promote employee volunteer opportunities? *Select all that apply.*

RANDOMIZE
1 Email
2 Company intranet
3 Employee Giving Portal
4 Text/SMS
5 Employee Resource Groups
6 Signage/informational flyers in common areas
7 Townhalls or other company meetings
8 Boss/leadership
9 Team/department meetings
10 Other, please specify _____
11 None of the above

DEMOGRAPHICS

Now we have a few final questions for statistical purposes only.

61. In what regions does your company/organization operate? *Select all that apply.*
1 North America
2 Europe
3 Middle East
4 Asia/Pacific
5 Latin America
6 Africa
7 Other [SPECIFY]
8 Not sure

62. How long has your company been in operation?
1 Less than 1 year
2 1- 2 years
3 More than 2, less than 5 years
4 5-10 years
5 10+ years
6 Not sure

63. Considering all lines of business, about how much was your company's total gross revenue last year?

IF COUNTRY (Q04)=US:
1 Less than $5 million
2 $5 million to less than $10 million
3 $10 million to less than $50 million
4 $50 million to less than $100 million
5 $100 million or more
6 Does not apply to my employer
7 Not sure

IF COUNTRY (Q04)=UK:
1 Less than £4 million
2 £4 million to less than £8 million
3 £8 million to less than £40 million
4 £40 million to less than £80 million
5 £80 million or more
6 Does not apply to my employer
7 Not sure

IF COUNTRY (Q04)=INDIA:
1 Less than ₹400 million
2 ₹400 million to less than ₹800 million
3 ₹800 million to less than ₹4 billion
4 ₹4 billion to less than ₹8 billion
5 ₹8 billion or more
6 Does not apply to my employer
7 Not sure

IF COUNTRY (Q04)=UAE:
1 Less than 18 million د.إ
2 18 million د.إ to less than 35 million د.إ
3 35 million د.إ to less than 180 million د.إ
4 180 million د.إ to less than 370 million د.إ
5 370 million د.إ or more
6 Does not apply to my employer
7 Not sure

Appendix A: Survey Instrument, continued

IF COUNTRY (Q04)=SINGAPORE:
1 Less than $7 million
2 $7 million to less than $14 million
3 $14 million to less than $70 million
4 $70 million to less than $140 million
5 $140 million or more
6 Does not apply to my employer
7 Not sure

64. For statistical purposes only, which of the following best represents your total household income?

IF COUNTRY (Q04)=US:
1 Less than $35,000
2 $35,000-$49,999
3 $50,000-$74,999
4 $75,000-$99,999
5 $100,000-$149,999
6 $150,000-$199,999
7 $200,000-$299,999
8 $300,000+
9 Prefer not to answer

IF COUNTRY (Q04)=UK:
1 Less than £30,000
2 £30,000-£41,999
3 £42,000-£62,999
4 £63,000-£83,999
5 £84,000-£124,999
6 £125,000-£166,999
7 £167,000-£250,999
8 £251,000+
9 Prefer not to answer

IF COUNTRY (Q04)=INDIA:
1 Less than ₹2.8 million
2 ₹2.8 million to less than ₹4 million
3 ₹4 million to less than ₹6 million
4 ₹6 million to less than ₹8 million
5 ₹8 million to less than ₹12 million
6 ₹12 million to less than ₹16 million
7 ₹16 million to less than ₹24 million
8 ₹24 million or more
9 Prefer not to answer

IF COUNTRY (Q04)=UAE:
1 Less than 129,000 د.إ
2 129,000 د.إ to 183,999 د.إ
3 184,000 د.إ to 275,999 د.إ
4 276,000 د.إ to 366,999 د.إ
5 367,000 د.إ to 550,999 د.إ
6 551,000 د.إ to 734,999 د.إ
7 735,000 د.إ to less than 1 million د.إ
8 1 million د.إ or more
9 Prefer not to answer

IF COUNTRY (Q04)=SINGAPORE:
1 Less than $48,000
2 $48,000-$68,999
3 $69,000-$102,999
4 $103,000-$137,999
5 $138,000-$206,999
6 $207,000-$275,999
7 $276,000-$413,999
8 $414,000+
9 Prefer not to answer

65. How would you describe the area in which you live?
1 Urban (in a city)
2 Suburban or outside a city
3 Small town
4 Rural

66. Do you have a university or college degree?
1 Yes
2 No
3 Prefer not to answer

67. What is your age? _____
MIN=0; MAX=99. INCLUDE "Prefer not to answer"

68. Are you living with a physical or mental impairment or disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities?
1 Yes
2 No
3 Not sure

69. **ASK IF (Q04<>2 OR 3) (NOT IN SINGAPORE OR UAE):** How would you describe your sexual orientation? *Select all that apply.*

RANDOMIZE
1 Straight/Heterosexual
2 Lesbian
3 Gay
4 Bisexual
5 Pansexual
6 Asexual
7 Queer
8 Questioning/Unsure
9 I use another term (please specify: _____)
10 Prefer not to say
11 Not sure

70. **ASK IF (Q04<>2 OR 3) (NOT IN SINGAPORE OR UAE):** Do you identify as transgender?
1 Yes
2 No
3 Not sure
4 Prefer not to say

Thank you for your time and feedback!

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Background:
- 25 virtual interviews, 5 per country (US, UK, UAE, India, Singapore)
- 60 minutes each
- Conducted via Zoom + Slack for backroom chat

Introductions (10 Minutes)
1. Moderator introduction, including confirmation to record
2. Respondent introductions:
   a. Where are you calling from today?
   b. Let's talk about your job. Tell me a little bit about it — where do you work, # of employees, tenure, role, work setting (i.e., home, office, other)?
3. Describe in a few words or phrases what it's like to work at your company.
   a. How would you describe its mission and values?
   b. What is the company culture like?

Employee Volunteer Programs (40 Minutes)
Switching gears, some companies have employee volunteer programs. These are company-organized volunteer opportunities, paid time off to volunteer during the workday, serving on a nonprofit board, attending charity events, etc.
1. Tell me about your company's employee volunteer program.
   a. If you had to rate it — would you say it is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor? What makes you say that? (Probe on pros and cons)
   b. Tell me about the organizations and opportunities your company offers through the employee volunteer program?
      i. Why these organizations?
      ii. How, if at all, do they align with your company's mission and values? How important is that?
   c. Do employees have input on the organizations, causes, or activities your company supports?
      i. How important is that?
      ii. If so, how do they weigh in?
   d. Does your company typically just volunteer once with an organization, with the same organization once/year, occasionally, or regularly? How important is that to you?
   e. What, if anything, does your company do to encourage employee volunteering? How is it promoted to employees? How do you find out about these efforts?
      i. From whom?
      ii. Through what kind of communication/channels?
      iii. Is it something that a lot of employees know about? (i.e., is it well advertised?)
      iv. Do a lot of employees participate? Why/not?
   f. Who typically participates in volunteer activities at your company?
      i. How important is WHO participates to you personally? Tell me about that.
   g. In what ways, if at all, does the company's leadership promote or participate in these activities? How important is that to you? To other employees?

2. What do you think about employee volunteering — how important is this to you personally? How important is it to your employer?

3. What are some of the benefits of having a program like this …
   a. To the company?
   b. To its employees?
   c. To you personally?

4. What made you get involved? What were you hoping to get out of it? Personally? Professionally?

5. In what ways have you participated? How have those experiences been?
   a. Tell me about the types of activities you've done. Are some better than others? How come? Probe on:
      i. **Community volunteering,** such as beach or park clean-ups, building homes, etc.
      ii. **Team fundraising events**, such as walks, runs, rides, etc.
      iii. **Person-to-person volunteering**, such as serving meals at a food bank, visiting the elderly at a nursing home, etc.
      iv. **Professional skills-based volunteering**, such as providing job training or advice, mentoring, or giving professional services to someone in need, etc.
      v. **Leadership volunteering**, such as serving on a board or committee of a non-profit organization or charitable cause
      vi. **Advocacy-based volunteering**, such as raising awareness about or encouraging support for an issue that is of public interest
   b. How important is it that you make use of your professional skills and expertise when volunteering? What makes you say that?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol, continued

6. How, if at all, have these volunteer experiences impacted you personally? How do they make you feel?

7. How, if at all, have they impacted you professionally?

   a. How have they impacted your professional growth and development? Give me an example of that.
   b. Do you feel like you have developed any important skills? Tell me about those…
   c. [SHOW LIST ON SCREEN] Let me show you a list, and please let me know, which if any, you feel you have developed through employee volunteering. For each — how important is developing this skill to you? Did this help you grow personally, professionally, or both? (For any they don't choose — how come?)
      i. Collaboration
      ii. Commitment
      iii. Communication
      iv. Confidence
      v. Creativity
      vi. Critical thinking
      vii. Empathy
      viii. Entrepreneurship
      ix. Respect for different types of people
      x. Kindness
      xi. Leadership
      xii. Presentation skills
      xiii. Problem solving
      xiv. Project management
      xv. Responsibility
      xvi. Self-awareness
      xvii. Teamwork
      xviii. Time management
   d. And what would you call those types of skills?
   e. I've heard people use a few different terms, and I want to get your reactions to each (probe on what each means to them):
      i. Professional development
      ii. Professional skills
      iii. Purposeful development
      iv. Do you prefer one of these over the other? How come?

8. Does your company recognize or thank employees in any way for their participation in these volunteer activities?

   a. Tell me about that … how are employees recognized?
   b. How important do you think that is?
   c. Let me give you a few examples of how other companies have recognized employees, and I want to get your reactions (Probe: positive, neutral, negative, how come).
      i. Include employee volunteer participation in performance reviews
      ii. Give volunteer participants promotional giveaways (t-shirt, tote bag, coffee mug)
      iii. Acknowledge volunteer participants in internal communications (newsletters, emails, town halls, etc.)
      iv. Acknowledge volunteer participants in external communications (annual report, website, etc.)
      v. Company leadership personally acknowledges/thanks people who have volunteered

Outreach and Best-in-Class Programs (10 mins)

1. In what ways do you think your company could improve outreach and participation?

2. **WRAP UP:** We've talked a lot about your employee volunteer programs. What advice would you give to make yours EVEN BETTER?

   a. What do you think are the most important pieces of a best-in-class employee volunteer program?
   b. What are some things that you think your company should change, no longer do, or avoid?
   c. Any other advice on this topic?
   d. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

ARES