



THE GIVING WORKPLACE

A toolkit for employer-supported volunteering.

THIS YEAR, WE WANT TO START A CONVERSATION AROUND EMPLOYER- SUPPORTED VOLUNTEERING.

We're encouraging businesses and organizations to give back through voluntary action and supporting them to see how their giving spirit can create incredible community impacts while encouraging others to follow suit.

Employer-supported volunteering can (and often does) pay massive dividends to your bottom line, not least of which by **stabilizing your staff** and **broadening your visibility**.

We're not kidding. There are loads of statistics to back us up, but we'll get to that.

This toolkit was made to give you and your workplace a spark to start volunteering. Inside, you'll find a broad background on employee-supported volunteering, including facts, stats and examples of why volunteering is a great thing for everyone in your organization. You'll also learn what you can do as a volunteer, where you can find opportunities, and—regardless of whether you've been volunteering for years or you've never given it a second thought—how you can share your experience and impact to inspire those around you!



Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations

PURPOSE To give businesses a background on volunteerism in Edmonton, the benefits of employer-supported volunteering, and, most importantly, how best to approach it for the first time.

ABOUT ECVO The Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations is member-based nonprofit organization serving the nonprofit and charitable organizations in Edmonton. Our vision is a strong, vibrant community strengthened by an effective voluntary sector working together with government and business.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK National Volunteer Week is an annual commemoration that recognizes volunteers and celebrates the power of volunteerism in communities across Canada.

Every year, ECVO leads the Edmonton community in this celebration of community impact. We do this in a variety of ways including: awareness campaigns to educate and empower individuals to seek volunteer opportunities, the annual Edmonton Volunteer Fair with 70+ organizations recruiting volunteers and promoting their opportunities and other initiatives and events that promote the value of volunteerism in community.

WHY YOUR COMPANY SHOULD VOLUNTEER

Only when you stop to consider the inter-relatedness of our differing sectors do you realize the complex and interwoven ecosystem that is professional life.

When employers have skilled and resourceful teams, they're able to provide better services for their clientele, more easily meet their corporate goals, and more clearly see how corporate values and skills can be leveraged for greater social change.

When non-profits, charities, and community associations have skilled and resourceful volunteers, they're able to do more with limited budgets, have greater impact in their communities, and create hugely beneficial connections across sectors and disciplines.

Volunteering helps companies and employees as much as it does our communities.

Here are some quick statistics from a recent study¹:

70%
OF PEOPLE BELIEVE
VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES
BOOSTS EMPLOYEE
MORALE

77%
SAID THAT COMPANY-
SPONSORED VOLUNTEER
ACTIVITIES ARE ESSENTIAL
TO EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

89%
BELIEVE THAT COMPANIES WHO
SPONSOR VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES
OFFER A BETTER OVERALL
WORKING ENVIRONMENT
THAN THOSE WHO
DO NOT

Not only does volunteering build a positive work environment and improve culture, it also makes better employees. Volunteering is the perfect way to build professional skills to augment professional development training. Employees learn valuable and transferrable skills that make them better in their roles, improve their leadership skills and improve their ability to meet company goals.

ROBERT HALF² SURVEYED MORE THAN 440 CANADIANS.

They noted many benefits of volunteering but the second best reason for volunteering in the workplace after enhancing wellness was that **it helped employees gain new skills.**

WHAT SKILLS, YOU SAY?



COMPANY MEETS COMMUNITY

How your staff can create massive impact.



GROUP VOLUNTEERING

Many companies strive to do one day of giving every year. This is fantastic – not only is it a more engaging approach to team building, but your company makes new and lasting relationships with organizations that need ongoing support, AND it's a great way for the entire team to be involved in a fulfilling and fun opportunity.

But there are other, often easier, ways your company can make a difference...



INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERING

Did you know many non-profits face a unique struggle when large groups of volunteers approach them? Many organizations have limited resources and capacity to find large group volunteer activities. Their programs are often not set up in a way that is conducive for a large group to volunteer.

Instead of your entire team going to volunteer on one day, your company could:

- **Encourage and support** an employee to take on a formal role in an organization of their own interest.
- **Portion a certain number of hours** each month for employees to volunteer during work hours.
- **Think outside the box:** Partner with an organization to provide them with a needed skill or service outside of their formal program
- **Lead by example:** share the ways your leadership and staff give back by volunteering.

FINDING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There are about as many approaches to this as there are days in the year, but here's a few tips to get you going that we think will help you design the perfect volunteer program for your team.



STEP 1 Survey employees to see what causes they'd like to support and their goals for volunteering. The goals can be **personal** (giving back, feeling good) or **professional** (skill building, team building) and both are equally valid. It's important to get buy-in from the team from the offset. You want your team to volunteer, not be voluntold!

STEP 2 **Start hunting!** Edmonton alone has more than **5,000 non-profits**. Surprising? Perhaps. Overwhelming? It doesn't need to be. Here are your two best options:

- Take a deep dive into **Volunteer Connector**, a massive and constantly changing database of current volunteer opportunities for groups and individuals alike. www.volunteerconnector.org
- Use the information from your surveys to research (yes, research!) and then reach out to organizations or causes that your employees will be excited to support. Start a conversation about how your company may be able to help – not just once per year but on an ongoing basis.

IT STARTS WITH A CONVERSATION, BECOMES A RELATIONSHIP, AND ENDS WITH IMPACT!





SEE! HOW EASY WAS THAT? NOW, THE EASIEST PART OF ALL...



**Do you already have employee-supported volunteering in your company?
If not, have you started testing the waters?
Will you start now that you have this handy toolkit?**

We want to hear from you! Sharing your story not only helps us know if this toolkit has been helpful, but we also want to use your story to inspire and encourage other businesses to embark on a similar journey.

We want to tell as many stories as we can of the myriad ways people, businesses, and organizations are working together to make our city a better place. **Be the inspiration that we know you can be!**

Here's how you can share your story with us:

Email us: volunteerism@ecvo.ca

Mention us (@EdmCVO) with your story on social media using the hashtag #yegvolunteers.

Please send stories, descriptions, one-liners or anything that captures what you're doing! We're also here to answer any questions or receive feedback.

Happy volunteering!

REFERENCES

¹ 2017 Deloitte Volunteerism Survey. www.deloitte.ca

² www.roberthalf.ca



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