



Case Studies

Corporate Generosity Involving Employees

How a corporation engaged their employees in charitable giving

The following account is based on a client's experience with Excellence in Giving. Identifying details have been changed to protect anonymity.

Recently a company hired Excellence in Giving to help define the focus of their charitable giving, improve the company's giving process and increase employee participation in this area. The company's partners hoped to develop a strategy to their charitable giving that corresponded with their passions and priorities not only as a company, but as individuals as well. Above all, they wanted their corporate culture to reflect generosity to the community surrounding them.

The Plan

Earlier in the year Excellence in Giving organized a company workday at a local non-profit that engaged the employees on a physical level. However, because the day had been well organized ahead of time, the employees just had to show up and work hard. The three partners wanted to figure out a way to involve the employees more deeply in the giving process. The company traditionally funded projects all over the world, yet as year end approached with \$100,000 left in their charitable budget, the partners decided to focus on the needs in the local community. With the help of Excellence in Giving, the partners developed a challenge that would involve employees and help the community immediately.

The 15 employees were divided into five teams of three, giving each a budget of \$20,000 and the choice of three organizations out of 15. A draft-pick style event started the challenge with the 15 pre-screened organizations up on a white board. Once the teams picked 3 organizations, they had to set up meetings with the various directors to find out what the most pressing needs were and how much money could address that need. The team could give their entire \$20,000 to one organization or divide it up however they deemed appropriate. The teams had to agree on the allocation of the funds and be prepared to write up their findings and rationale behind their decision. Finally, the decisions would be revealed at their Christmas

party four weeks away.

This was not an easy task to give already time-strapped employees. Many of them had to conduct their interviews during their lunch hour or after work. Most had never spoken to non-profit leaders before. Excellence in Giving helped them develop probing, effective questions to ask and was available to help them in the process.

The Outcome

At the office Christmas party the teams' choices were revealed. \$100,000 was appropriated to 15 local charities that serve foster children, homeless, jobless, domestic violence response teams, refugee families, prisoners, and troubled youths. A food bank, the Salvation Army and an organization that issues short-term loans to families in crisis also were recipients of the funds. The checks were written and distributed before Christmas.

The Impact

The employees engaged in their assignment head-on. As each team shared their final donation decisions at the Christmas party, the positive impact was evident. The most common thread among reactions was an

"By hiring Excellence in Giving to build a corporate giving environment, the employees and the community were impacted!"

overall feeling of gratitude to have the opportunity to work for a company that would put \$100,000 back into its own community at the Christmas season. The second most common reaction was that it was an eye-opening, learning experience for them to get out there, to meet people and ask questions. The employees learned first hand that the needs of their very own community were much more than they realized. Some employees even offered volunteer hours after seeing the needs. The partners were satisfied that the goal of infusing their corporate culture with generosity had been met.

