

Not why, but how! Corporate involvement in volunteering at the workplace: towards a program design model

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Abstract

In this conceptual paper we argue that corporate involvement in volunteering is a potential instrument in managing the employee-employer professional relationship at the workplace. To date, most literature on corporate volunteering and the employer-employee relationship is focused on attraction, selection, or retention and lacks an integrative view of the potential role of corporate involvement in volunteering in all stages of an employer-employee relationship, including in employees' transition. Therefore, we firstly develop a framework of the different stages of the employer-employee relationship; including the prospect, newcomers, established and transition stage. Subsequently, we build the argument that in these different stages, the outcomes of corporate involvement in volunteering will likely differ. Then, we develop a framework for corporate programs based program design. We argue that a continuum of a personal, bottom-up approach (employee led) and a strategic, top-down corporate approach (employer led; Van der Voort et al., 2009) is likely to offer the solution to address the different needs (benefits) of the organization and its employees during the different stages of their relationship. With this model, we suggest that in the initial stages of the relationship between employers and employees, corporate involvement in volunteering should be highly directed by the company, while in later stages the influence and voice of employees should be more prevalent in volunteering to reap most workplace related benefits. Consequently, we combine these insights in our final model, showing the link between program design and the different stages, including the outcomes accordingly.

Our findings have implications for CSR, corporate philanthropy and HR scholars. We contribute by providing a model that shows 1) the different outcomes of corporate involvement in volunteering in different stages, and 2) explain how these outcomes can be established. These insights also support managerial practice in developing their programs.

Introduction

“It is one of the beautiful compensations in this life that no one can sincerely try to help another without helping himself”.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

It is clear from this quote that the well-known and influential writer Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) did not believe in the strict interpretation of helping others which is considered to be purely beneficial for others, not the self (see for an overview of definitions: Cnaan et al., 1996). It shows that even in the 19th century some people supported a more instrumental view on helping others. In contemporary society, this view is still relevant as volunteering is increasingly used for self-serving purposes, next to serving the broader community. For example, for many years, volunteering is used in service learning courses in higher education for experience based learning (see Kenworthy U'Ren, 2008) or by (non-)governmental organizations to increase employability (Haski-Leventhal, et al., 2010). In this paper, we share this interest in the instrumental view on volunteering, and we particularly follow a strategic approach to volunteering through the workplace by focusing on: *corporate involvement in volunteering*.

We approach corporate involvement in volunteering as a corporate strategic approach to volunteer activities enacted by employees which is aimed to both benefit employees and serving business interest. This goes beyond the conventional view of corporate volunteering (also known as employee volunteering, employer supported volunteering or workplace volunteering), which is interpreted as volunteering via the organization where the individual is employed (Brewis, 2004; Kotler and Lee, 2005). With our broader view, we include corporate interest in volunteering for prospective employees and those ready for transition into retirement or another job. We thereby argue that companies can benefit by having corporate involvement in volunteering beyond the official employment relationship (see also for example Gully et al., 2013).

We feel that this is relevant as corporate volunteering is the most implemented strategy of Corporate Social Responsibility (Aguilera, Rupp, Williams & Ganapathi, 2007; Basil, Runte, Easwaranmoorthy & Barr, 2009) and is considered to be the most growing CSR activity in Western Europe and North America (Pajo and Lee, 2011). Among other benefits, corporate volunteering is an effective way to serve Human Resource Management (HRM) goals, including employee engagement, organizational commitment, organizational identification and human and social capital (Caligiuri et al., 2012; Grant et al., 2008; Madison

et al., 2012; Muthuri et al., 2010). Facilitating corporate volunteering at the workplace even holds the potential to attract talented prospective employees to the organization (Pereira, 2003). A broader perspective on corporate involvement in volunteering could broaden the scope of benefits to HRM, including facilitating transiting employees in increasing their employability (see also for regular volunteering: Paine et al., 2013) and into a meaningful retirement (see also for regular volunteering Musick and Wilson, 2008).

While studying the link between corporate involvement in volunteering and HR, studies have focused on the HR effects of volunteering through the workplace (Caligiuri et al., 2012; Grant et al., 2008; Madison et al., 2012), disregarding the implications for diverse groups of employees. This is not surprising as few managers are clear about how to identify and understand the needs of different employees within the organization (Bhattacharya, et al., 2012). Therefore, this research is aimed to understand how CSR managers can implement corporate involvement in volunteering for workplace related benefits. We do so by explaining how managers can use this instrument throughout the stages of the career to reach various goals within each career stage by offering a program design model. We argue that a choice between a personal, bottom-up approach (employee led) and a strategic, top-down corporate approach (employer led; Van der Voort et al., 2009) is likely to offer the solution to address the different needs (benefits) of the organization and its employees during the different stages of their relationship.

We aim to contribute to the debate of corporate volunteering as HR instrument in at least three important ways. First, similar to strategic CSR, we introduce corporate involvement in volunteering as an effective way to for companies to use volunteering for business interests. We argue corporate involvement in volunteering requires careful thought on the design of effective corporate volunteer programs that serves business interests, particularly HRM related. Second, we clearly make a distinction of corporate involvement in volunteering for (potential) employees in different stages in their relationship with their (prospective) employer, including attraction, socialization, retention and transition into other work or retirement. As such, we argue that employee participation in corporate volunteering can be an effective tool in all stages of the employee-employer relationship. To our knowledge corporate involvement in volunteering is yet to be described as a powerful mechanism in transitioning employees. Although scholars have acknowledged the powerful role of volunteering for employment (see for example Franzen & Hangartner, 2006) or as active aging after retirement (for example, Martinson and Minkler, 2006), there is little known about the role of the company in contributing to the transition into retirement or other work.

Third, next to other job related incentives (such as paid leave and bonuses), volunteering through the workplace has the potential to serve as non-monetary reward or stimulant for employees as it might help them to reach higher order psychosocial needs (Bhattacharaya et al., 2012), such as purposefulness and meaningfulness at work (Rodell, 2013). However, many organizations have limited understanding of employee needs that can be fulfilled by corporate volunteering. This study will also address this potential.

To develop a convincing argument for these three contributions, we begin this paper by contextualizing volunteering in the workplace, including explaining our interpretation of corporate involvement in volunteering. Afterwards, we discuss the stages of the relationship between employers and employees in which volunteering can be used for HRM purposes. Within this framework, we elaborate on potential HRM outcomes resulting from corporate involvement in volunteering. Finally, we explain what type of volunteer programs can implement to benefit the employer-employee relationship. Here, we present a continuum by using two diverse types of programs; an employee led program and an employer led program. We conclude this paper by discussing the contribution to research and how CSR managers can use our strategic corporate volunteering framework to reach their goals.

Volunteering and the workplace

In this article, we view corporate involvement in volunteering as companies' responsiveness to volunteering ranging from formally recognizing volunteering by (prospective) employees or to actively facilitate or organizing volunteer opportunities for their employees. As the concept volunteering is widely discussed in literature and the interpretation can range from a narrow to broad perspective, it is important to explain how we view volunteering within the context of the (potential) employee-employer relationship. Here, we view volunteering as discretionary behavior of individuals, without any formal remuneration, through and for a formal organization to primarily benefit others beyond the self (Cnaan et al., 1996). This is in line with the definition of volunteering in the workplace, e.g. corporate volunteering (see Kotler and Lee, 2005).

In corporate volunteering, the act of volunteering results from the deliberate involvement of the corporation by integrating policies in the professional sphere with something that has traditionally been seen as a personal and individual act (Houghton, Gabel, & Williams, 2009; Van der Voort, Glac, & Meijs, 2009). Volunteering through the workplace (e.g. corporate volunteering) refers to volunteering by employees that is recognized,

encouraged or even facilitated by their employing organizations (Brewis, 2004, Haski-Leventhal, Meijs, & Hustinx, 2010). Policies on corporate volunteering can range from allowing employees to volunteer either in the employee's own time (with paid leave or other support from employer) or during official working hours (Meijs & Van der Voort, 2004). Corporate volunteering thus takes place through a formal organization (the company). However, corporate volunteers do not volunteer for the company, they volunteer for Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) *on behalf of* the company. It is considered the most unambiguous form of discretionary behavior within organizations (Grant, 2012), as it is not solely internally focused on the interest of the company and its employees, but also externally focused on (beneficiaries of) NPOs, who fall outside the organization's mission (Hernandez, 2012).

In our interpretation, corporate involvement of volunteering includes this concept of corporate volunteering but also expands on it as we argue that corporate involvement in volunteering should start even before the employee is formally employed at the company. For example, organizations can explicitly look for volunteer experience on the resume of potential candidates during recruitment. In addition, corporate involvement in volunteering can be used as a signal in the recruitment advertisement to attract high potentials (REF). It can take up responsibility for employees beyond their employment by providing them volunteering opportunities during employment which helps them either to increase their employability or find meaningful leisure after retirement (REF). The next section we discuss the HRM outcomes of corporate involvement in volunteering in a four stage model by combining insights of literature on both volunteering and corporate volunteering.

A four stage model

As benefits of corporate involvement in volunteering do not arise for all employees in a similar fashion, it is important to acknowledge that corporate volunteering has different implications in each of the stages in the relationship between the employee and employer. Indeed, Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun (2012) explain that it is important for managers to incorporate CSR programs, including corporate volunteering "tailored to the often diverse needs of employees.... and configure their CSR [Corporate Social Responsibility] efforts to address the unique needs of [employees]". Moreover, the relationship between an employee and the organization changes and develops over time and corporate volunteering can play a different role when this relationship develops and each actor has new needs in the different stages. For example, corporate volunteering has different effects when it is used while

introducing new employees in the organization and to their new colleagues than when they are employed for many years. Moreover, it has been shown that it serves several functions ranging from attracting prospective employees (Albinger and Freeman, 2000; Greening and Turban, 2000; Jones, Willness and Madey, 2010) to employee retention through enhanced commitment (Brammer, Millington and Rayton, 2007), identification (Kim, Lee, Lee and Kim, 2010) and value congruence (Rupp et al., 2013).

Consequently, to discuss workplace outcomes in relation to (corporate) volunteering we firstly have to develop a framework which captures the different stages in which corporate volunteering can be used. Our starting point for this model is based on insights of the ASA model (Schneider, 1992) and career development model (Super, 1957). We provide an alternative to the ASA model to develop an integrative model as the scope of the paper includes corporate involvement in volunteering during the relationship between an employer and (prospective) employee. For this purpose, the ASA model is not sufficient as it is intended to explain the socialization process between employees and their employers. Although the stages presented in the ASA model are extremely interesting and useful in some respects, the purpose of this paper goes beyond the quest for socialization. For example, corporate involvement in volunteering can also support the development of employees' skills and human capital. Moreover, the purpose of the paper is also to explain how to create/sustain employee retention; a stage which is not included in the ASA model. Moreover, we found that regarding employee workplace benefits and volunteering, the attraction and selection phase of the ASA model can be comprised into one stage, while we feel that newcomers within the organization and employees with longer tenures are interesting categories which need to be discussed separately with regard to the potential of volunteering. Moreover, though the attrition stage of the ASA model explains that employees leave the organization as they do not feel a fit with the environment anymore, it does not acknowledge that people can also leave an organization due to retirement (which is in many Western countries obliged by law, not by personal choice). Given the abundance of literature suggesting that volunteering can enhance employability (see Menchik & Weisbrod, 1987; Day & Devlin, 1998; Carlin, 2001; Segal & Weisbrod, 2002; Gunderson & Gomez, 2003; Musick and Wilson, 2008; Paine, A. E., McKay, S., & Moro, D., 2013) and meaningful retirement (Gorey, 1998), we argue that corporate involvement in volunteering can be important in transiting employees to other work or retirement. Consequently, our model holds four different stages: the prospect phase, newcomers phase, established phase and transition phase.

The first stage in the (potential) relationship between employers and employees is when employers are soliciting job opportunities and individuals are seeking jobs. We name this first stage “prospect phase” and both the employer and employee are potential candidates to be chosen by one another. In this stage, we particularly focus on the attraction and selection of the employee. After the prospect phase, prospective candidates are hired (e.g. selection has taken place) and the relationship between the employer and employee evolves into a working relationship. In this second stage, the employee is new in the organization. Therefore we label this second stage as ‘newcomer stage’. In this stage, we focus on the employees’ socialization and professional development within the organization. Newcomers transit into the established phase of employment when they are socialized with the organization and gained the initial professional development. The third stage is when employees have been working at the organization for some time (perhaps in different roles, but not necessarily) and they are fully socialized within the organization. The relationship between the employer and employee is already established and professional developments in these stages are incremental. We label this stage as ‘established stage’. The fourth stage is the ‘transition stage’, where employees and employers acknowledge that the relationship will end within a reasonable amount of time and the employee will either transit into another (paid) job or will retire. Figure one summarizes the different stages.

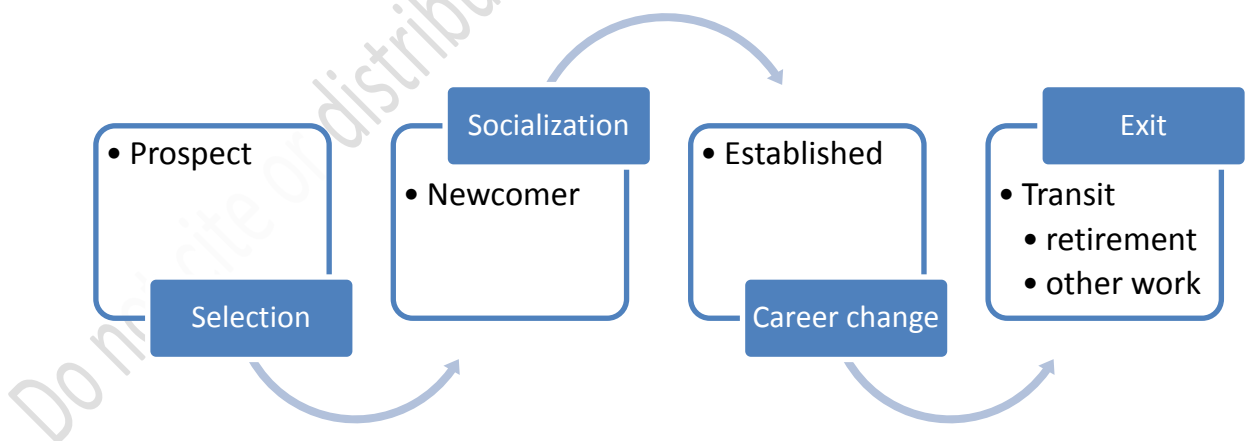


Figure 1: The four stage model

Outcomes of corporate involvement in volunteering within the four stage model

In all of these stages, volunteering (either in private or on behalf of the company) can be instrumentally used to benefit the organization and the employee while, at the same time, benefit the broader community. Although the benefits may be overlapping in the different stages or at least might occur in multiple stages, some benefits are more likely in certain stages than others. We explain this in the next four sections.

Outcomes of corporate involvement in volunteering in the prospect phase

In this phase, initial commitment of the company to volunteering by recognizing volunteering of prospective employees potentially helps the employer to choose the proper candidate that fits the organization and the job. Economic theory has suggested that volunteering plays a unique role in the labor market through its use as a signaling device. For example, Katz & Rosenberg (2005) showed that the volunteer signals the (potential) employer that he or she has qualities that make him or her more desirable than other candidates. Applicants might use their volunteering experiences as positive signals and successfully compete and enhance careers prospects, negotiate higher salaries, and get better jobs (Freeman, 1997; Menchik, & Weisbrod, 1987; Prouteau & Wolff, 2006). Prospective employees can also show that involved or informal learning has taken place (Roza & Meijs, 2014).

Conversely, employers can use volunteer and community involvement signals to attract certain type of employees. Studies have shown that prospective employees are attracted to socially responsible organizations if they perceive themselves as having socially responsible values (Evans & Davis, 2011). They are particularly more attractive for higher educated people and generation Y individuals as they tend to have higher values on corporate social responsibility and in turn on community involvement of companies (Sobczak, Debucquet and Havard, 2006; Turban and Greening, 2001). Moreover, employers can ultimately use volunteering during selection procedures to help them identify employees that fit the CSR values of their organizations (Gully et al., 2013) as it is shown that corporate volunteer programs can enhance value congruence and person-organization fit (Evans & Davis, 2011), even in the prospect phase. Advertisement messages about an organization's social responsibility values interact with applicants' desire to have a significant impact through work which positively influences job pursuit intentions (Gully et al., 2013).

Next, assessing candidates can be partly based on volunteering. An employer faced with many suitable applicants may use volunteer experiences to infer skills, or even increased marginal productivity. Studies on volunteering show that volunteering is related to the individual employability, enhances chances of finding a job through a better resume, network, skills and self-esteem (Musick and Wilson, 2008). Volunteering can be seen as a direct investment in human capital (e.g., Menchik & Weisbrod, 1987; Day & Devlin, 1998; Carlin, 2001; Segal & Weisbrod, 2002; Gunderson & Gomez, 2003) and volunteers are more likely than non-volunteers to have leadership ability, social self-confidence, critical thinking skills, and conflict resolution skills (Astin & Sax, 1998; Astin, Sax, & Avalos, 1999).

Outcomes of corporate involvement in volunteering in the newcomers phase

Within the newcomers phase, corporate involvement in volunteering can act as a mechanism for organizational socialization and social and human capital. Volunteerism has been touted as a low-cost answer to corporate training needs (Caudron, 1994). Although mostly based on self-reported data, the skills and perspectives that employees acquire through volunteer activities can include: people skills, an increased ability to work as part of a team, contacts made that can be used at work, improved work teams, new and innovative ideas that can be used at work, sharing knowledge, acquiring new skills, and new perspectives on their own business (Bart et al., 2009; Muthuri et al., 2009).

Moreover, research shows that active engagement in corporate volunteering can lead to an increase in social capital with external stakeholders. Particularly, the willingness to collaborate and building shared understandings of values that should be apparent by doing business in society (Muthuri et al., 2009). As such, it can enhance the newcomers' relationship with external stakeholders, such as clients or the broader community.

Similar to organizational needs in this newcomers phase, newcomers themselves want to establish new relationships with their other organizational members and want to feel part of the group. It is shown that volunteering can be very helpful for creating new and strengthen existing networks (Muthuri et al., 2009). Within the newcomers phase, employees want to get acquainted to people beyond their existing network (which is very limited if one is new in an organization). Thus, corporate involvement in volunteering by facilitating corporate volunteering can help employees to meet new people within the organization.

Outcomes of corporate involvement in volunteering in the established phase

Particular in the established phase, corporate involvement in volunteering by facilitating corporate volunteering opportunities can increase employees' motivation and intentions to retain with the organization. Indeed, numerous studies have found that corporate volunteering plays a vital role in increasing employee engagement and organizational commitment (Brammer et al., 2007; Caligiuri et al., 2012; Grant et al., 2008; Madison, et al., 2012; Maignan, Ferrell, & Hult, 1999; Maignan & Ferrell, 2001; Kim, Lee, Lee, & Kim, 2010; Pelozo & Hassay, 2006; Turker, 2009). For example, Bartel (2001) draws upon social identity theory to suggest that corporate volunteer programs enhance employee engagement among participants, as they experience increased self-esteem through their perceived associations with their employers. In addition, employee volunteer experiences can "create a positive energy from the act of volunteerism that has the effect of strengthening employees' affect toward their employers and producing higher employee engagement overall" (Caligiuri, et al., 2012, p.32). Moreover, empirical evidence shows the beneficial effect of corporate volunteering practices on employee morale, motivation, commitment, loyalty and turnover (Tuffrey, 2003) and can increase the employees' willingness to speak highly of their employer (Pelozo and Hassay, 2006). As such, corporate involvement in volunteering serves as a mechanism to employee retention.

Although the numerous benefits of engaging in corporate volunteering are evident for the organization, these benefits are also evident for the employees as employees want to live happy lives including jobs that are challenging and meaningful (Rodell, 2013). Employees often care about making a positive difference in the lives of others (Grant, 2007). Corporate volunteering can lead to the development of the individual in terms of the sentiment that volunteer activities give meaning to life, the opportunity to see how others live, an appreciation of what one has and inner satisfaction (Muthuri et al., 2009). Moreover, while in the newcomers phase it is important to create new social capital (e.g. getting to know other people), in the established phase it might be more relevant to employees to strengthen the relationships with co-workers. As with volunteering in private life, employees can deepen or create more meaningful relationships (Bartel, 2001) through corporate volunteering. As such, organizations and employees can use volunteering for the personal and professional development during the established phase of their relationship where the emphasis lies on creating a working environment where employees can prosper and be comfortable.

Outcomes of corporate involvement in volunteering in the transition phase

In the transition phase, corporate involvement in volunteering can either reinforce employability of employees transiting to other jobs (either inside or outside the organization) or support employees transit into a meaningful and purposeful retirement. In transitioning to other work, it is important that one increases his or her employability (see for example, Antoni, 2009; Spera, Ghertner, Nerino, & DiTomasso, 2013; Zimmeck, 2010). Indeed, research shows 25% to over 50% of the volunteers feel that volunteering had a positive impact on their chances of finding a job (Hall, et al., 1998; Hirst, 2001; Spera, Ghertner, Nerino, & DiTomasso, 2013). Next to signaling as discussed in the prospect phase, and human and social capital (networking and developing skills in the newcomers and/or established phase), we can identify at least one additional beneficial effect of corporate volunteering in the transition phase: experimenting. Corporate volunteering offers individuals the opportunity to experiment with various social structures – some of which may be new to the individual – that ultimately lead to the development of the individual's world and work perspectives as realized through the multiple social environments they are likely to encounter (see for volunteering: Handy & Brudney, 2007).

While developing skills, signaling and networking might be of less interest during the transition to retirement, the notion of experimenting remains of interest in this type of transition. It is found that corporate volunteers are also likely to volunteer in private life (De Gilder et al., 2004). This correlation is particular of interest as recently, the concept of active aging has been given much attention. The idea behind active aging is the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age (WHO, 2002, p. 12). 'Active' means the continuing participation in the community, by being active either as a volunteer, in informal care or being in the workforce. It is shown that people who remain active in society later in life are less depressed (Musick and Wilson, 2003) and enhance their quality of life (Fraser, et al., 2009). In this respect, volunteering can be seen as a way of active aging as it seen as a serious leisure activity (Stebbins, 1996), with many wellbeing related benefits (Morrow-Howell et al., 2003; Thoits and Hewitt, 2001). Indeed, volunteering is associated with social connectedness, and with feelings of belonging (Battaglia and Metzger, 2000; Musick, et al., 1999), which in turn can increase their psychological state of mind.

To further develop the theoretical framework to explain how different benefits arise in different stages of the employer-employee relationship as we proposed above, we particularly look at program design in the next section.

A program design model

Effective program design increases the probability that the desired outcomes will be achieved (REF). As such, we use a program design to develop a framework to reach the above described potential goals of corporate involvement in volunteering in the four stages of the relationship between the employer and employee.

In general, two types of corporate volunteer programs can be distinguished in which the company actively involve and facilitate in volunteer opportunities for their employees (see table 1). On the one hand, employees select the charities for which they wish to volunteer, receiving passive support from the company (see inter-organizational volunteerism in Pelozo and Hassay, 2006). Second, the employer selects the charity and is “proactive in the development of strategic volunteer opportunities for its employees” (see intra-organizational volunteerism in Pelozo and Hassay, 2006, p. 360). In each of these two types of program, it is either the employee is dominant in the decision-making process on who, what and when while in the second type of program the employer is dominant in the decision making process. Indeed, the first type is framed as private while the second is framed as having a more public character with corporate volunteering as a strategic instrument with which to achieve corporate goals (Van der Voort et al., 2009). Therefore, we label these types of programs as employee-led and employer-led (see also Van der Voort et al., 2009).

Conceptually employer-led programs are dominated by the assumption that such programs need a certain degree of “fit” between the strategy of the firm and the mission of the charity in order to maximize the effects of the partnership (e.g., Sen & Bhattacharye, 2001; Porter & Kramer, 2002). In contrast, employee led programs might not be aligned with corporate strategy as the interest of the employee is prevalent. However, employee led does not imply that the organization has no say or responsibility at all towards the employee within the corporate volunteering program. The organization can explain opportunities and actively support and encourage people to take time to look into volunteer opportunities. For example, if the employee previously did not take part in any volunteering (either corporate or in private) it is less likely that she/he will take part in the program as volunteering is socialized behavior (Musick and Wilson, 2008). Therefore, if organizations want employees to take part in their programs (either it be employer led or employee led), they should address individual (Roza et al., work in progress) and organizational level barriers (Batharaya et al., 2010).

In addition, there are five stages of pressure which can be placed on a continuum between the two types of programs, moving from employee-led to employer-led programs: 1) low social pressure through completely voluntary participation with an element of socialization; 2) limited pressure to participate by emphasizing the rewards of volunteering; 3) moderate social pressure through the creation of clear expectations and information about the kind of volunteering desired; 4) high pressure through hierarchical expectancy, with volunteering as an important element in the functional evaluation of employees; and 5) maximum pressure through obligation (Meijs et al., 2009). Additionally, two additional choices are central in the design and implementation of such programs: 1) type of program restrictions, and 2) type of benefits emphasized in the program (Meijs et al., 2009). First, the program restrictions are high when companies are dominant in the decision making processes of the program execution. The program restrictions are much lower in an employee led program, where bottom up initiatives of employees are encouraged and facilitated. These choices in to which degree the company is directing the program not only distinguishes the two types of program, it might also influence the benefits emphasized of the program and vice versa. It is more likely that employees experience organizational socialization through an employer led program, as the program is organized as such that it fully represents the norms and values of the organization. On the contrary, with an employee led program, some of the norms and values are being transferred (such as the importance of community involvement), but for the most part represent the personal norms and values of individual or groups of employees.

Usually, managers of corporate volunteering programs select activities in which the needs of employees (as volunteers) are weighted more heavily than the needs of the community (Benjamin, 2001). In this sense, when organizations are dominant in determining what employees will do, the emphasis of the program is more on the benefits for the company, assuming that the community will benefit from it (see Harris, 2012). In contrast, employee-led programs in which employees' makes choices about the activities are bound to put more emphasize on the employee or community benefits rather than strategic organizational benefits.

Employer Led**Employee Led**

Organization dominant in decision making
High fit between the charity-company
Low-to-high degree of (formal) pressure
Emphasis on company benefits
High program restrictions

Employee dominant in decision making
Potential low fit between the charity-company
Low degree of formal pressure
Emphasis on employee/community benefits
Low program restrictions

Figure 2: Employer versus employee led programs

Within these two programs, there are various ways of how organizations can implement corporate volunteering programs. For example, teambuilding activities are high priority for almost every large company that is engaged in corporate volunteering. Interaction with co-workers is of major importance to the success of projects aimed at bonding or bridging between employees. Bartel (2001) reports that such volunteer experience with co-workers can enhance mutual understanding deepen the relationships between co-workers. During such activities, co-workers are brought closer together as they share experiences that they have never shared before. Interaction with both co-workers and beneficiaries enable participants to broaden their horizons and increase their internal and external networks (Grant, 2012). Moreover, participants appreciate the opportunity to meet others within the company and to be recognized by others for their participation (Peloza et al., 2009) enhancing their self-images. Interestingly, even team volunteering of employees of different companies can result in deeper organizational identification (Peloza & Hassay, 2006) and could well be combined with exploring other job opportunities, and extending the professional network for business purposes.

Next, corporate volunteering programs can also facilitate individual volunteer opportunities. In individual assignments, employees volunteer by themselves at a NPO. This does not exclude the possibility of doing a team assignment at the NPO, however, the team does not include co-workers from the company. Nevertheless, in many cases the volunteer assignment will be performed individually. Examples could include mentoring or buddy projects (see for example Big Brother, Big Sister), visiting people in solitude and teaching at local schools (for example the IBM on Demand Community Program).

Many of these corporate volunteer opportunities have an episodic character. Although MacDuff (2004) distinguish three types of episodic volunteers in within non-profit organizations, there are roughly two types of episodic volunteers that are likely to occur in corporate volunteering. First, a 'temporary volunteer' is a person who provides a service that is short in duration, usually for the maximum of one day. The person will probably not return, and is not otherwise engaged at the nonprofit organization. This is mostly in line with what Cnaan & Amroffell (1995) conceptualize as ad hoc volunteering. Examples of corporate volunteer assignments for temporary volunteers are gardening, going to the zoo with elderly or providing a workshop for children. Second, the 'interim volunteer' provides a service to a nonprofit organization on a regular basis but for less than 6 months. Thus, they provide services that are continuous for a certain period of time. For example, coaching or mentoring projects.

Both individual volunteering and team volunteering, as well as episodic volunteering and volunteering with a more structural commitment can be done in social activities or through skill based volunteering. A good example of a corporate social activity includes family volunteering in which employees can bring their families and friends to their corporate volunteer assignment. This way, a company can combine family days with volunteering (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2009). Within program design, these contingencies should be taken into account to further crystalize the activities that companies will facilitate.

Applying the employment and program design model to the outcomes of corporate involvement in volunteering; a preliminary model.

Although the dominant paradigm in Corporate Social Responsibility on strategic alignment of these activities with the core business seems to be in favor of employer-led programs, research on corporate volunteering reveal that employee-led (bottom-up) programs are be successful as well. Peloza and Hassay (2006) report that many volunteer programs have experienced considerable success in terms of employee participation, despite a lack of strategic approach of the company. This suggests that the combination of a personal, bottom-up approach (employee led) and a strategic, top-down corporate approach (employer led; Van der Voort et al., 2009) is likely to offer the solution to address the different needs (benefits) of the organization and its employees during the different stages of their relationship. Therefore, in the next sections, we will explain how differences in program design can help organizations reach the HR related benefits in each stage.

In the prospect stage, organizations should communicate (signal) their corporate volunteering activities in line with who they are as an organization. As such, we suggest that the corporate involvement in volunteering should be in line with the core business, find community partners with a high fit with the company and restrict programs and assessment to what the company values. Therefore, the program should be fully employer led as the company can determine these characteristics and adapt the involvement accordingly. This type of involvement is easy for the organization to communicate and for prospective employees to understand as there is a clear fit between the involvement in volunteering and the company. Moreover, it allows the company to assess the skills that are needed within the organization and if the employee is the proper candidate for the job.

Particular in the newcomers phase, organizational socialization is important (see Schein, 1967). It refers to the process through which employees acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, values and behavior to become effective organizational members. For newcomers, this process is also referred to as onboarding (Bauer and Erdogan, 2011). In this process, tactics can be used to introduce newcomers to the new organization. Traditional mechanisms to do so include formal meetings and printed materials, but a more novel tactic is corporate volunteering (Grant et al., 2008; Gully et al., 2013; Rupp et al., 2013). The emphasis of the organizational tactic should be on further developing and expanding the employer-led corporate volunteer program. Here, the organization can use corporate volunteering programs to socialize the newcomer in the organization. The organization wants to have a say in what the employee will do during volunteering as it should fit the organizations values, behavior and needs. For example, to combine socialization and professional on the job training, corporate volunteer programs in this stage could offer skill based volunteering based upon the needs of professional skill development. In many organizations corporate volunteers are providing workshops in which they can practice their presentation skills and social skills.

In the established phase, we showed that corporate involvement in volunteering can enhance satisfied, committed and fulfilled employees. As employees might differ in their attitudes towards their employer and the corporate involvement in volunteering (see also Christensen et al., 2014), it is important to offer a variety of options to employees here. While some employees like to follow and approve whatever the employer is suggesting regarding corporate volunteering, others are more likely to be willing to pursue their own initiatives (see also Van der Voort et al., 2009). As socialization with organizational values and most instant

professional development already has been established, the emphasis of the organizational tactic should be twofolded. To actively serve most employees in this phase, there should be a combination of employer and employee led (see also Van der Voort et al., 2009), allowing the employee to either solicit volunteer opportunities themselves or join initiatives by the company.

In the transition stage, the organization facilitates the individual employee towards other work or into retirement. There is no longer the need to socialize the employee with the organization, to find opportunities that serve their position at the organization, but the organization wants to remain having a good reputation as an employer. As such, the emphasis here should lie on employee benefits derived from volunteering, employees should have a clear say in the decision making process and the autonomy of the employee should be prevalent. As a result, for these types of employees, an employee led program facilitated by the organization has the most fit with the needs of the individual employee. Here, the organization can encourage and support employees to find volunteer activities that fit their needs. For example, organizations can support employees with providing time off to look for proper opportunities or sending them volunteer opportunities that they might find fitting with the employee. Once the employee finds suitable activities, organizations can facilitate their participation by for example offering a flexible working schedule. Figure demonstrates the conceptual model based on the four stages and the program design framework.

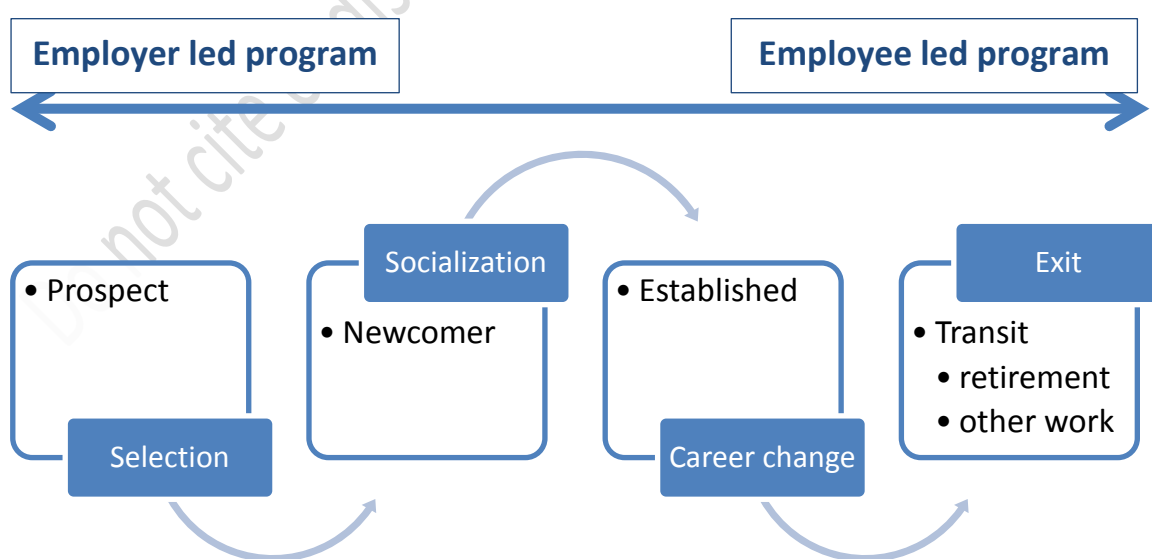


Figure 3: Corporate involvement in volunteering program model

Conclusion

Institutionalized, institution-encouraged or instrumental volunteering becomes very common in contemporary society (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2009). For example, volunteering is instrumentally used to increase the employability of citizens by social benefits authorities, it is used in service learning by universities to achieve educational goals and it is used by companies for the development of their employees. In this paper we argue that corporate involvement in volunteering is a potential instrument in managing the employee-employer professional relationship at the workplace. Using a multi-theory approach, we developed a conceptual framework in which workplace related (organizational) benefits are explained by program design. We suggest that in the initial stages of the relationship between employers and employees corporate involvement in volunteering should be highly directed by the company, while in later stages the influence and voice of employees should be more apparent in facilitating volunteering to reap most workplace related benefits. These initial suggestions lead to many more interesting research questions and suggestions on empirical work to develop on a better understanding how managers can influence outcomes of their programs by using program design models.

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