International Corporate Volunteerism as a Win-Win-Win

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In the past decade, there has been a fourfold increase of firms adopting international volunteerism programs.
IBM video
WIN 1: Talent Development and Engagement

WIN 2: Sustainable Benefit to NGOs

WIN 3: Value Creation for Organizations
Team assignments or Individual assignments

Open to high-potentials or Open to all employees

Short (weeks) or Long (months)
Deep Dive into Win 1: Talent Development and Engagement
Stretch Challenge Features of a Developmental of Cross-Cultural Experience

• Novelty
  – Cultural novelty (Dragoni et al, 2014)
  – Experience the challenge of different societal values (Gupta & Govindarajan, 2002)

• Challenge
  – Overcome obstacles and experience paradoxes (Osland, 2000)
  – Experience disconfirmation of expectations (Rosenblatt, Worthley, MacNab & 2009)
Contact-Based Features of a Developmental of Cross-Cultural Experience

Rosenblatt, Worthley, MacNab, 2009; Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012

- Allport’s (1954) contact theory and the optimal contact conditions for intergroup relations (Pettigrew & Troop, 2006)
  - Significant, meaningful, peer-to-peer interactions
  - Common goals
  - Supportive context
- Bandura’s (1977) social learning theory
  - Opportunities to practice newly-learned behaviors
  - Professionally “safe” to make cultural mistakes
  - Opportunities to receive feedback
Pepsi Video
Manager-Rated Change in Cross-Cultural Competencies

- Self-Management Competencies (e.g., Tolerance of Ambiguity, Resilience)
  - F = 6.27, p < .05
- Relationship-Management Competencies (e.g., Perspective-Taking, Humility)
  - F = 8.33, p < .01
- Business-Management Competencies (e.g., Knowledge of Global Issues)
  - F = 13, ns

Role Models, Exceeds Expectations, Solid Performer, Development Needed, Below Expectations

Before Pulse
- Role Model: Below Expectations
- Exceeds Expectations: Development Needed
- Solid Performer: Below Expectations
- Below Expectations: Development Needed

3 Months After Pulse
- Role Model: Below Expectations
- Exceeds Expectations: Development Needed
- Solid Performer: Below Expectations
- Below Expectations: Development Needed

Inference: The intervention has significantly improved self-management and relationship-management competencies, while business-management competencies showed a trend towards improvement but were not statistically significant.
Conditions to Maximize Employee Engagement

Three conditions necessary for increasing engagement: (1) meaningfulness, (2) psychological support, and (3) availability of resources (Kahn, 1990; May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004; Rich et al., 2010).

Employee Engagement

(1) High Social Support, High Availability of Resources
(2) High Social Support, Low Availability of Resources
(3) Low Social Support, High Availability of Resources
(4) Low Social Support, Low Availability of Resources
Win 2: Sustainable Benefit to NGO
Conditions to Maximize Sustainable Impact on the NGO

To promote project sustainability, the capacity of the volunteer and the capacity of the NGO should both be high (Sherraden et al., 2008)
Win 3: Organization Value Creation
Conditions to Maximize Knowledge Creation

Project Meaningfulness

- Connecting work with the goals of the NGO will “attend to, absorb and interpret information about the task and the broader social context” for learning to occur (Bartel et al., 2001, p. 269).

Utilize Professional Skills in the Novel Context of the NGO

- Volunteer assignments can stretch the volunteers’ range of professional skills (Bartel et al., 2001; Pless et al., 2011)

Social Support for the Volunteer

- Volunteer work which occurs in isolation with little support is less likely to provide the necessary elements for new knowledge creation (Pless et al., 2011).