

A New Era of CSR & Teambuilding

Tom Farndon and Alan Ranzer
Impact4Good

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Corporate Social Responsibility: It's easier than you think and there is more than one way to do it well. Consider how to connect your cultural and corporate values to those of external mission-based organizations. Impact 4 Good has the answer. We call them the 4 Ps of meaningful CSR efforts.

These steps to success start with identifying a **Purposeful** tie-in to the issues of the world at large or a cause uniquely tied to your organization. Next comes deciding on the **Powerful** impact your event can have on your community partners to help them achieve their goals and objectives. These two ideas are then wrapped up in a **Professional** implementation of an experience, showing stakeholders and event participants the depth of your dedication to the community. All of these are bound together and elevated to new heights via **Passionate** and sincere connections, bridging the gap between the corporation and the community, making sure that all who attend feel inspired by the work they have accomplished and the contributions they have made. Once you can meaningfully connect these 4 P's, you can make an *Impact for Good*.

Purpose-Driven Results

There is a certain baseline desire for people to be a force for good in the world. The very existence of nonprofit organizations is a testament to passionate individuals who share a common

desire to change their communities for the better. No matter the size of the donation, the amount of volunteer hours spent, there's an overarching goal to all CSR events: making an impact on local organizations dedicated to their neighbors. When you leave your incentive trips, don't just leave behind a bill. Leave a bit of yourself, and your commitment to the communities you visit. Doing so reminds attendees how easy it is to engage with the myriad nonprofits who are all looking to do the same thing: to help people be safe, happy and successful.

The newest generation of workers are looking for meaning in their work. Not just on a day-to-day basis, but in the overall outlook of a company's philanthropic mission. Where money used to be the prime deciding factor, CSR has evolved not only into a substantial way to impact local communities, but an effective tactic to incentivize younger people to stay with a company. When a company has a proven track record of supporting social impact causes, it gives a window into the bigger picture of a corporation's overall objectives.

According to a survey by Deloitte in 2021:

“Aligning with Gen Zs’ and Millennials’ values is also key. Nearly two in 5 say they have rejected a job or assignment because it did not align with their values. Meanwhile, those who are satisfied with their employers’ societal and environmental impact, and their efforts to create a diverse and inclusive culture, are more likely to want to stay with their employer for more than 5 years.”

Authentic engagement in CSR is no longer an optional tenet of good corporate citizenship—it’s a necessity. Authentically integrating your CSR values into your meetings and events is also no longer optional—it’s a necessity as well.

As an example, a client had a sincere wish to give back to a cancer foundation not only because it aligned with their industry, but because a treasured colleague lost their fight with cancer. In another instance, an executive wanted to donate stuffed animals to kids because his wife was the recipient of one when they experienced complications during the birth of their first child. When these clients designed their events, they kept that



emotional note at the forefront of their programming, and they shaped the experience to tap into the company’s desire to make the lives of those they were benefitting more bearable.

In another example, a client had been in the final planning stages of planning for months for a 1,200-person casino giveback event in Las Vegas to donate to organizations improving local education programs. They had already chosen the venue, the keynote speakers and the philanthropic impact. Then, just 30 days before the event, the 2010 earthquake in Haiti turned the lives of millions upside down. In an act some may have seen to be impulsive, this client switched gears to contribute to the relief efforts immediately, facilitating the donations of tens of thousands of dollars toward 5 organizations on the ground in Haiti. Pivoting their event, and helping at that scale and at that speed, resulted in a monumental impact that helped ease the suffering of thousands of people.

You also see this in companies aligning their philanthropic giving to organizations in their industry, such as tech companies promoting STEAM education, restaurant chains combating hunger and more. Consider a call to your CSR division to see if there are causes and organizations you should be considering for your give-back event. Once that connection has been established, and the purpose discovered, it’s time to move on to the next step.

Powerful Impact

As important as it is to ensure you achieve your corporate goals and objectives surrounding philanthropic giving and



employee engagement, it's equally essential to meet the same goals and objectives for your beneficiary organization. Yes, we have to wear our meeting planning hats and consider logistics of time, space, group demographics and more when determining giveback options at the inception of agenda design. But remember that just because you have a great idea on how to make a difference, it doesn't mean it fits the needs of your intended beneficiary. It's best not to force your concept on a nonprofit, as they really want to have a relationship with corporations and might be willing to accept a donation that might not suit their needs just to get their foot in the door. Your role is to not put them in that position.

One client was having a meeting in the greater Atlanta area and learned about the Murphy family. The Murphy's, already the parents of four, opened up their home to 23 children with special needs since adopting their daughter Shannon in 1983, which was a monumental undertaking. They lived in a small house and had a lot of needs. Instead of guessing the needs, the family was asked what their needs were. The result was the assembly of personal storage cubbies for each child so they could have their own space amidst the clutter of a large family, and individualized wrapped holiday gifts for each and every child.

Once purpose and power have been identified, it's time to wrap it up in a professionally executed event.

Professional Delivery of the Message

What matters almost as much as the message itself is the delivery. The driving force behind any philanthropic activity is the heart and soul of the participant. It's up to the event to channel that passion for difference-making into a meaningful understanding of the impact they are making.

Conversations should be guided in a way that doesn't pigeonhole the participant into a stock response, but rather allows for the individual character of your participants to factor into the giveback. It's integral to create an open atmosphere that invites collaboration and communication, and encourages individuals to express themselves personally in their donations. Activities are created and custom tailored to match with the overall theme of your event, and of your donation, rather than relying on a cookie-cutter mentality that only takes into consideration the ticking of objective boxes. Facilitators should be trained in active audience engagement, and be knowledgeable on current CSR goals and trends, delivering a seamless and enjoyable experience from start to finish.

Teambuilding is more than the sum of its parts, and the only way to convey that appropriately is ensure that the experiences of your participants bring to mind the societal desire to make a social impact. The delivery of this message must be authentic, and it must not hide behind a disingenuous adherence to social impact merely from a reputational standpoint. It needs to be

grown from a fundamental foundation within your company, and in doing so you proceed to the conclusion, passion.

Passion as a Catalyst

The overall goal of a CSR activity is to reinforce the unique goal of connecting clients to their local community. Teambuilding is more than skills-building, icebreaking or morale-boosting; it's about channeling a common passion into an experience with a community-based purpose.

Focus on an immersive experience that transcends the typical boundaries of a teambuilding program. Remind your attendees that a good teambuilding program extends out into the community, that it leverages the social compassion and reservoir of hope of your attendees to be a force for good and change, and to frame that within the framework of their day-to-day jobs. Most important, do this in a succinct and professional manner, and leave nothing to chance. Extra donation materials, an abundance of trained staff, and a charismatic keynote

speaker are all ways to ensure that the impact of good teambuilding isn't bogged down by the minutiae. Let the details work in your favor, and deliver a program so exceptional that it reworks the meaning of teambuilding.

When it comes to serving your community, think first to your own memories. Consider the impact of the good will of others that has left a mark on your life. Take that experience, and do the work of passing it onto the next person in the chain. Keep that string of good deeds unbroken as you impact the lives of those that need our help the most, all under your company's name. When you can walk away from an event with a better understanding of what it means to be connected to colleagues and community alike, that's when you know that you have helped solidify the bonds that tie us all together.

References:

Deloitte, (2022) *Striving for balance, advocating for change: The Deloitte Global 2022 Gen Z & Millennial Survey*





A growing number of companies and organizations are implementing business practices centered on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Group meetings, conferences and incentives can be an extension of these efforts.

Florida's Paradise Coast is committed to providing meeting professionals with just the right CSR opportunity for their group. The Naples, Marco Island and Everglades CVB embraces conservation and sustainability from both a people and planet perspective, and we are happy to have you join us by adding a rewarding CSR project to your meeting or incentive agenda. The Paradise Coast is home to a wealth of philanthropic organizations, many of which offer CSR-friendly group volunteering or donation opportunities.

For an experience that gives attendees an authentic glimpse at what makes Southwest Florida unique, Sea Excursion's Ten Thousand Islands Dolphins Project offers structured encounters with wild dolphins that result in meaningful data for resource managers, universities and marine research organizations, and also increases public awareness of the need to protect and conserve marine life and habitats. The project is privately funded and supported by corporate advertising sponsors.

Area beach volunteer groups, such as Friends of Tigertail Beach on Marco Island, welcome groups to assist in beach cleanups in an effort to raise public awareness of their important and fragile ecosystems. And plentiful other opportunities are available to support the local arts, animal welfare, environmental concerns, healthcare and more.

For assistance in planning your CSR project on Florida's Paradise Coast, please contact Group Sales Manager Lisa B. Chamberlain, CMP at (239) 252-2425.

About Naples, Marco Island & The Everglades

A natural and cultural gem, Florida's Paradise Coast is where the Gulf of Mexico's sparkling waters meet white sand, unspoiled islands and downtowns filled with artful treasures, culinary delights and countless other discoveries. Explore Naples, Marco Island and the Everglades, and find your most idyllic Florida meeting destination.

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As the industry trends toward scaled-down, regional meetings, it's even more beneficial to meet in a smaller destination like historic Alexandria, Virginia, on the Potomac River within eyesight of Washington, D.C. Old Town Alexandria continues to evolve with distinctive event spaces ranging from boutique hotels featuring waterfront views to full-service convention properties. The city may be smaller in size, but it's larger in charm and attentiveness. Plus, there is nowhere quite like Alexandria that offers such high level and innovative leadership training opportunities as part of The Leadership Collection at Alexandria™.

Launched in early 2020, The Leadership Collection at Alexandria™ is Alexandria's exclusive collection of three nationally recognized executive leadership and teambuilding opportunities - the George Washington Leadership Institute at Mount Vernon, McChrystal Group and Building Momentum. The collection's latest enhancements put Alexandria at the forefront of revolutionizing the future of leadership training. Learn more:

- Building Momentum recently expanded its corporate training offerings to include welding team building, boat regatta, full day team building and custom sessions, all highly interactive, hands-on leadership programs that are both educational and fun.
- The Fred Smith National Library at George Washington's Mount Vernon will re-launch The Situation Room: Experience Washington's Cabinet in late 2022, allowing attendees to assume the roles of integral leaders in the U.S. actively working together to manage both international and domestic crises.
- The McChrystal Group is providing a new Inclusive Leadership series examining four key factors that fall within a leader's control that impact perceptions of environmental inclusion.

About Alexandria, Virginia

Just five miles from Washington D.C. and an easy drive from East Coast hubs, Alexandria is an accessible and distinctive destination for small to midsize meetings. Named a Top 3 Best Small City in the U.S. 2021 by Condé Nast Traveler, Alexandria boasts unparalleled waterfront views for your next meeting.

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With attractive benefits like the accessibility of two major airports, more than 35,000 hotel rooms, and the affordability of labor rates 27 percent below the national average, Dallas is the ideal meeting destination in Texas. The Dallas community is both welcoming and philanthropic, and there are numerous organizations eagerly looking for volunteers for groups of all sizes all year long. Here are three places to consider when planning your volunteer outing.

CitySquare

CitySquare is a Dallas agency that fights the causes and effects of poverty through service, advocacy and friendship. Since 1988, the organization has been battling hunger and providing support for everything from healthcare and housing to workforce empowerment and legal representation. Group sizes of 25 people or less are ideal for their space, but they welcome big groups and will work with you to find the best fit. Citysquare.org

North Texas Food Bank

The North Texas Food Bank provides access to more than 200,000 meals for hungry children, seniors and families every day. There are several ways to volunteer, including the Community Pantry where you can assist in personal shopping for families or help stock the pantry. There's also the Mobile Pantry, nutrition services programs and various special events available throughout the year – perfect for groups of all sizes. Ntfb.org

Resource Center Dallas

Resource Center Dallas serves as the primary LGBTQ and HIV/AIDS service organization in North Texas and is one of the largest LGBTQ community centers in the U.S. The center offers various programs and services including support groups, youth programs, nutrition services and more. The volunteer program collaborates with groups and businesses to organize a project for your group's needs. Myresourcecenter.org.

About Visit Dallas

Visit Dallas is dedicated to promoting Dallas as the ideal visitor and convention destination. Dallas, the ninth-largest city in the United States and the leading business and financial center in the Southwest, offers travelers an unparalleled array of amenities, a central location, and easy accessibility with two major airports. With 20 vibrant and diverse neighborhoods, including the nation's largest contiguous arts district and notable CityPASS attractions, there is a Dallas destination to suit every style.

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