

## Employee Giving – Drives

Surveys from the Entrepreneurs' Foundation of Silicon Valley Community Foundation network, employees consistently report that offering company-wide drives would increase employee engagement in community involvement activities. Holding a "drive" can expose the entire organization to a significant community cause, rally teams in healthy competition, increase overall community benefit and be fun!

Food drives and or toy drives during the holiday season are one of the more popular company-wide events. These activities often allow employees to give in-kind (food or toys) items, make cash donations or contribute volunteer service in connection with the drive.

Effective drives will include all of these exciting components. Companies can also avail themselves to a wealth of resources from their community partners such as promotion/marketing materials to help to increase engagement and outcomes. Visit [familygivingtree.org](http://familygivingtree.org) or [2ndharvest.net](http://2ndharvest.net) for examples of tools and resources they provide to corporate partners holding drives. Remember too that hunger is a year round cause and doing a company-wide food drive during the summer will generate renewed awareness and interest in fighting hunger.

Of course, drives are not limited to food and toys. Community organizations appreciate your drives to collect a variety of resources to support their cause. For example:

- Hold a company drive to collect items for the homeless; encourage employees who travel to gather toiletries for distribution, gather jackets or blankets in the fall
  - Back-to-school drives help youth prepare for school. Some areas coordinate regional drives (such as the Family Giving Tree) but you can partner with a local school or youth organization to collect backpacks and supplies to furnish a school or classroom
  - Cash drives for services can also make an impact; collect funds to send a classroom of students on educational field trips or outdoor experience that might otherwise not be possible
- Coordinate a book drive for an afterschool program or senior center
  - Collect energy saving CFLs and donate them to a nonprofit organization
- With a little creativity, the opportunities to use company-wide drives to support your giving program are endless. Every company is different and not all drive themes will effective for your group. Consider these 10 things (not in any particular order) when coordinating your drive:
1. Assemble internal champions that can help rally teams.
  2. Invite a representative from the benefiting agency to help inform employees about the cause you are trying to effect.
  3. If your drive includes more than one geographical area, collaborate with like agencies in your other operational geographies so that every employee has an opportunity to participate.
  4. Allow for diverse forms of giving to support your drive: (e.g., cash, in-kind, volunteerism)
  5. As appropriate for your enterprise, coordinate spirited competition among diverse departments to increase outcomes and energize employees; if able, offer a "company match" incentive if you reach your drive goal.
  6. Engage leadership. CEOs and executives that model community involvement, see similar outcomes at all levels of the business.
  7. Communicate. Set clear expectations with your community partners so that they can support your efforts and plan accordingly; engage your employees though regular and frequent communication channels.
  8. Set a goal. Studies show that if you set a goal for a drive your employees will exceed it and your overall outcomes will be greater than without having declared a goal.
  9. Recognize contributions. Share your drive results with your employees and recognize their time and contribution to the cause. Celebrate a successful drive.
  10. Have fun!