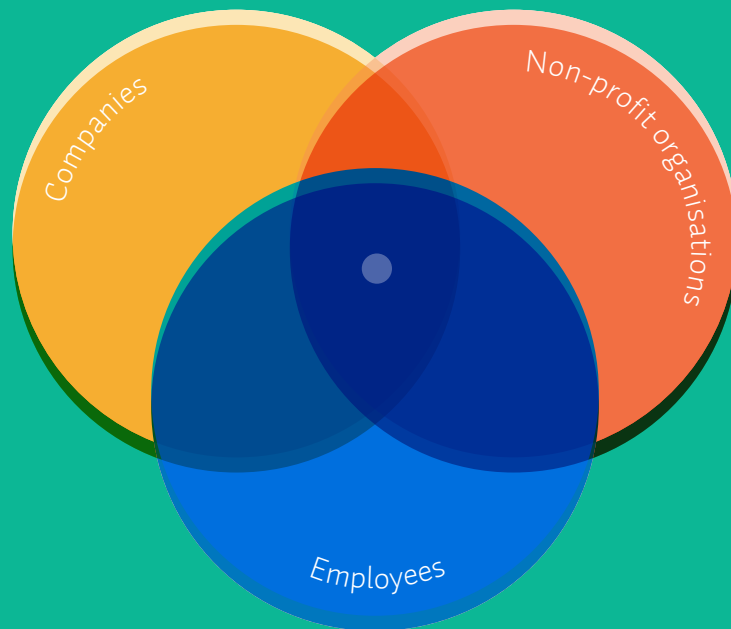


# Choosing the right set-up for **corporate volunteering**

Insights from the **DAX30**



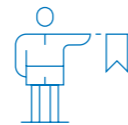
## Executive summary

Our insights from the DAX 30 show how Germany's largest publicly listed companies are tackling the hot topic of corporate volunteering – which refers to a company's support of its employees' societal engagement. In interviews with company representatives, it quickly became clear that the understanding and implementation of corporate volunteering, the motivations for pursuing it and the methods used to assess its impact were as varied and diverse as the companies themselves. However, at the same time, all companies are faced with the same questions:

- Should we support our employees in their private volunteering activities or develop our own programmes – or even both?
- Which type of corporate volunteering is more attractive to our employees: traditional or skills-based?
- What role do internal stakeholders such as management boards or works councils play?
- How do non-profits – from their perspective as potential partners – view corporate volunteering?
- Which business and social objectives are corporate volunteering programmes pursuing?
- How can the impact of corporate volunteering be measured?
- How should we communicate our corporate volunteering activities?

In light of these questions, and in view of the diversity among the companies, we have concluded that there is not any one magic formula for all-round successful corporate volunteering. But that doesn't mean companies have to get by without any guidance whatsoever. We believe instead that there are basic rules of the game which can prove useful when trying to choose the right set-up for corporate volunteering.

First of all, it is helpful to define clear parameters, thereby delineating the company-specific playing field in which corporate volunteering takes place. In order to ensure a successful kick-off, the employees' needs must be identified and incorporated into programme development. Once the game is underway, it is necessary that executives and senior management provide coaching in the form of credible buy-in of their employees' engagement. Finally, one must not forget that 'after the game is before the game'. It is only through an understanding of performance that one can learn from past efforts and improve and optimize future engagement. Well-thought-out and context-specific impact measurement procedures are vital for the management of corporate volunteering programmes.



This is significant because, in all likelihood, corporate volunteering will continue to become more relevant as part of overarching corporate citizenship strategies. But nevertheless, or perhaps because of this, the topic still needs to be examined critically in terms of issues such as real added value, authenticity and legitimacy. And this is something that ultimately benefits everyone – companies, employees and society.



**In a nutshell:**  
if corporate volunteering practitioners have clearly defined their playing field, executed the kick-off properly, secured solid coaching and kept a constant eye on performance, then corporate volunteering can be beneficial for the company, the employee and the non-profit.



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