



News Release

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Study: Volunteers and Non-Profits Overlooking Opportunities to Maximize Impact

2006 Deloitte / Points of Light Volunteer IMPACT Study Shows Valuable Workplace Skills of Volunteers Go Largely Untapped

NEW YORK, April 24, 2006 – Despite a need for more resources, the vast majority of non-profit organizations are not capitalizing on the valuable professional skills of their volunteers, a new study has found. More than three quarters of non-profit leaders (77 percent) believe that skilled volunteers could significantly improve their organization’s business practices. Yet just 12 percent of non-profits actually put volunteers to work on such assignments. That’s among the findings of the 2006 Deloitte / Points of Light Volunteer IMPACT Study, released today by Deloitte & Touche USA LLP and the Points of Light Foundation to coincide with National Volunteer Week.

“Professional skills of volunteers are extremely valuable to non-profits, but to a great extent, are being underutilized,” said James H. Quigley, CEO of Deloitte & Touche USA LLP. “This insight uncovers an untapped resource that could significantly increase the effectiveness of non-profits and their contribution to the community.”

“Volunteers are one of our nation’s most valuable assets, but more can be done to unleash their potential,” added Robert K. Goodwin, president and CEO of the Points of Light Foundation, the Washington, D.C.-based non-profit organization that sponsors National Volunteer Week.

Untapped Potential

The 2006 Deloitte / Points of Light Volunteer IMPACT Study, which surveyed non-profit executives and volunteers from corporate America, showed that nearly nine out of 10 non-profit leaders (89 percent) generally agree that volunteers’ workplace skills are valuable to non-profits. Working professionals shared a similar view. Seventy-three percent of them believe their workplace skills are valuable to a non-profit organization.

Yet, nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of non-profit executives report they do not work with any companies that provide volunteers. Just 12 percent of non-profits report they typically align tasks with the specific workplace skills of volunteers.

Other key research findings include:

- Two out of five volunteers (40 percent) say they actively look for opportunities to use their workplace skills when they volunteer
- Nearly one-third (29 percent) of volunteers believe their workplace skills are what non-profit organizations need from them most
- Only about one in five volunteers (19 percent) say they primarily apply their workplace skills in their volunteer assignments

The study indicates that skills-based volunteering is highly beneficial to the volunteer, as nearly two-thirds of volunteers (63 percent) think volunteering has had a positive effect on their career. Quigley notes, “People who use their workplace skills as volunteers are rewarded on many different levels. Often their volunteer experience gives people an opportunity to demonstrate and improve their abilities in a different context, which can spark creative problem solving that is directly applicable in the workplace. We see that frequently at Deloitte.”

Inspiring By Example

Following the theme of this year’s National Volunteer Week – “Inspire By Example” – Deloitte is acting on the findings of the 2006 Deloitte / Points of Light Volunteer IMPACT survey by enhancing its approach to IMPACT Day, the organization’s national day of volunteer service on June 9.

“Deloitte has a long history of contributing to its communities, and we believe we can have an even greater long-term impact by changing the way we view community involvement,” Quigley said. “We are implementing a long-term strategy to align the professional skills of our employees to help non-profits address strategic business challenges. We call this approach skills-based volunteerism.”

Survey Methodology

The 2006 Deloitte / Points of Light Volunteer IMPACT survey was administered by Opinion Research Corporation. A nationally representative sample of 750 white-collar workers who hold owner/manager or sales/clerical positions was asked eight aided and unaided questions in a CARAVAN[®] omnibus survey conducted March 2-6. Two subsequent, but independent, questions were asked of 755 white-collar workers March 23-27. Both surveys had margins of error of +/- 3.6 percent.

A nationally representative sample of 200 non-profit directors and managers were asked 10 different aided and unaided questions during an online survey conducted March 23-24. That survey had a margin of error of +/- 7.0 percent.

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About the Points of Light Foundation

The Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network engages and mobilizes millions of volunteers who to help solve serious social problems in thousands of communities. Through a variety of programs and services, the Foundation encourages people from all walks of life – businesses, faith-based organizations, low-income communities, families, youth, and older adults – to volunteer. For more information call 202-729-8000 or visit www.PointsofLight.org. To volunteer, call or visit www.1-800-Volunteer.org.

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