



# Doing Well by Doing Good:

Trends in Workplace Giving Programs



# Doing Well by Doing Good: Trends in Workplace Giving Programs

In the early 19th century, Andrew Carnegie challenged wealthy people to support social causes, but it wasn't until the 1940s that businesses, and not their owners or shareholders, could legally support charities.<sup>1</sup> The idea of corporate citizenship has since evolved, and many companies have moved beyond corporate giving and developed robust philanthropy and corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs. Today, most companies, even those without full-fledged CSR functions, recognize that some form of workplace giving has become an increasingly important offering in a competitive business environment.

Indeed, many consumers, especially millennials and younger generations, consider whether a company is a good corporate citizen when making purchasing, investment, and even employment decisions. They expect companies to do good. And what's more, they expect companies to provide opportunities for their *employees* to do good.<sup>2</sup>

Under this increasing pressure to not only do well financially but also do good in the community, many companies wonder how their workplace giving programs stack up to their peers. Some with less-developed programs also seek best practices and practical tips for creating or evolving their strategies to address marketplace expectations, as well as those of their employees. Many companies are interested in better managing and measuring their workplace giving programs and others struggle with how to get executive and employee buy-in. And, some companies want to start workplace giving programs but don't know where to begin.

Fidelity Investments, in collaboration with the Association of Corporate Citizenship Professionals (ACCP), surveyed representatives from 138 companies of various sizes and industries across the United States to better understand what kinds of workplace giving programs are being offered, how companies implement and manage those programs, and what trends are occurring in the field. For the purposes of this research, "workplace giving" refers to programs and strategies that support and encourage employees to volunteer or make donations to charities. It may involve organized volunteering opportunities, company matching of employee donations, additional paid time off for volunteer hours or other incentives, and corporate giving drives, among others.

The results validated recent research on workplace giving programs, but also offered some new insights. Among those insights, and perhaps most interesting, is that while companies have many motivations for offering workplace giving programs, respondents said that the most important reason their companies have these programs is to give back to their communities. This finding demonstrates how thoroughly companies have embraced their responsibility to both the communities they serve and to the employees who are part of those communities. Attracting and retaining talent is also a consideration, as employees place great value on giving back to their communities. Together with their employees, companies want to make a difference. Still, the motivations for maintaining workplace giving programs, the types of programs offered, and the way the programs are administered vary widely. And while workplace giving programs are maturing, companies still face challenges implementing and managing them.

<sup>1</sup> Source: "Corporate Social Responsibility: A Brief History," [https://www.accp.org/ACCP/ACCP/About\\_the\\_Field/Blogs/Blog\\_Pages/Corporate-Social-Responsibility-Brief-History.aspx](https://www.accp.org/ACCP/ACCP/About_the_Field/Blogs/Blog_Pages/Corporate-Social-Responsibility-Brief-History.aspx).

<sup>2</sup> "The Data Please: Making the Case for CSR," Carolyn Berkowitz, <https://www.accp.org/Blog-ACCP/CSR-Case-Data.aspx>.

# The Findings

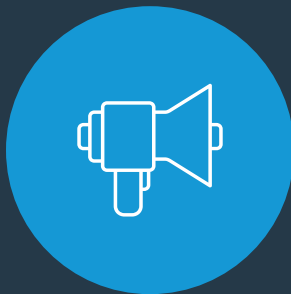
## Key Insights



The most important purpose workplace giving programs serve is to allow **companies to give back to the community**. And given employees' desire to make a difference through their workplace, the role of these programs in **attracting and retaining talent** is also significant.



Many companies, especially those with fewer than 10,000 employees, can benefit from **using a tool** to manage their workplace giving programs.



Companies with effective workplace giving programs **robustly promote them**.

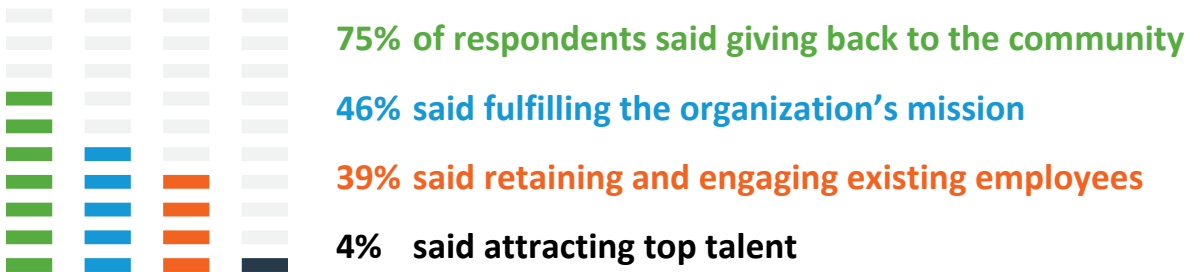


Workplace giving programs aren't going anywhere. **Funding for programs remains consistent or is growing**, and a significant number of companies plan to expand their programs and invest in resources to help administer them.

## Why have workplace giving programs?

While recent research shows that potential employees are attracted to companies with workplace giving programs, our study demonstrates that companies still feel that these programs are most important because they allow the company to give back to the community and fulfill its mission.

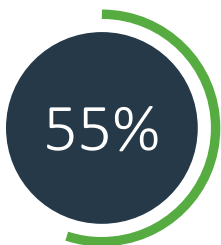
When asked what the most important benefit of their company's workplace giving program is:



*"We are a small company, and employees are so pleased and proud to see what a huge impact a relatively small organization can make in our local communities."*

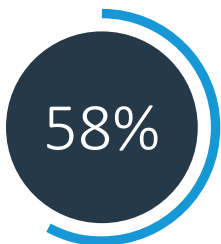
—Survey Respondent

While the role workplace giving programs play in attracting and retaining employees is not among the most important benefits, it is still significant.



55% said workplace giving programs are **somewhat or very important** in **attracting talent**

Fifty-one percent of companies surveyed said that the workplace giving program is promoted as a benefit to new recruits. Interestingly, among companies with fewer than 10,000 employees, only 46% promote the workplace giving program to new recruits, versus 57% of larger companies.

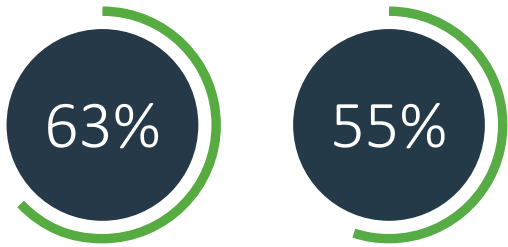


58% said workplace giving programs are **somewhat or very important** in **retaining talent**

Likewise, companies with more established workplace giving programs—those that have been in existence for 15 years or more—are more likely to value the programs as important to recruitment and retention.

### Attracting talent

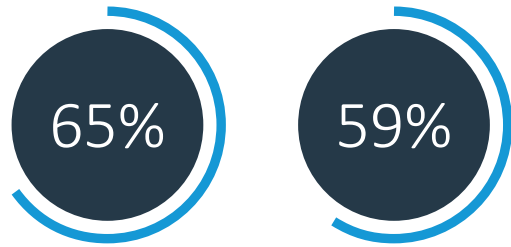
long-established programs vs. younger programs



63% of companies with long-established programs feel the programs are somewhat or very important in attracting talent versus 55% of companies with younger programs.

### Retaining talent

long-established programs vs. younger programs



65% of companies with long-established programs feel the programs are somewhat or very important in retaining talent versus 59% of companies with younger programs.

*“A regular donor through the program was offered a position at another company. When they shared their benefits, she noted that they only matched up to \$500 per year versus our \$5,000 match and counted that as a \$4,500 loss. It was not the only reason she stayed with us, but she made a point of telling me it was part of her decision.”*

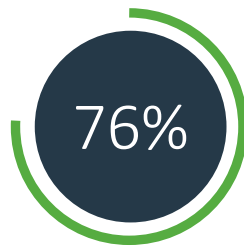
—Survey Respondent



## Growth of Workplace Giving Programs

The survey results indicate that companies are committed to sustaining or growing their workplace giving programs.

Among companies that have programs, over the past two years funding has:



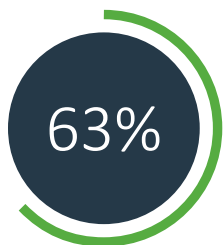
76% of companies say funding has **increased or stayed the same**

In the next two years, 39% of companies plan to expand their programs and 37% plan to keep their workplace giving programs the same. Only 1% of companies surveyed plan to reduce their programs.

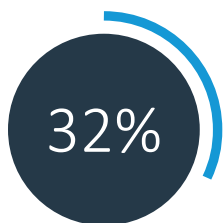
## How are programs managed?

While many companies (60%) self-administer their workplace giving programs, fewer than half utilize a workplace giving platform. Bigger companies are almost twice as likely than smaller companies to use online tools to manage the program.

### Use a workplace giving platform



63% of companies with **more than 10,000 employees**



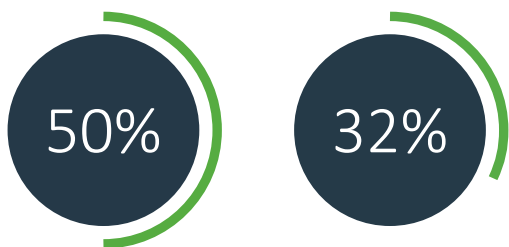
32% of companies with **fewer than 10,000 employees**



## What challenges do companies face, and how can they address those challenges?

All of the companies surveyed promote their corporate giving programs to their employees in some way. Still, the top concern remains employee awareness and participation. Forty-four percent are concerned that employee participation is too low, and about the same percentage worry that employee awareness of the programs is low. This concern is even more pronounced in companies with more than 10,000 employees.

### Concern about low awareness larger companies vs. smaller companies



The data suggests that robust communication about workplace giving programs results in greater employee engagement.

**Companies that promote their programs in more than three ways are 18% more likely to report that they are effective in getting strong participation among a wide range of employees.**



*"When employees are made aware and utilize the programs, they love it. It's just getting the message out to 84,000 employees around the world."*

—Survey Respondent

Incentives—like paid time off for volunteer work or matching employee donations—may also help promote employee participation in workplace giving programs, yet only 38% of companies report that they provide employees with such incentives.





Many respondents indicated that they do not have sufficient resources or adequate tools to manage their workplace giving programs.

1 in 3



One in three companies surveyed feel that they have insufficient resources to manage their workplace giving programs.



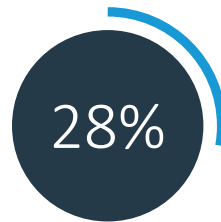
20% of companies feel the tools they use are **cumbersome and inadequate**

*“Our matching gift program is done manually: on paper by the employee and recipient organization; then by manual data entry into a database. It should be online.”*

—Survey Respondent

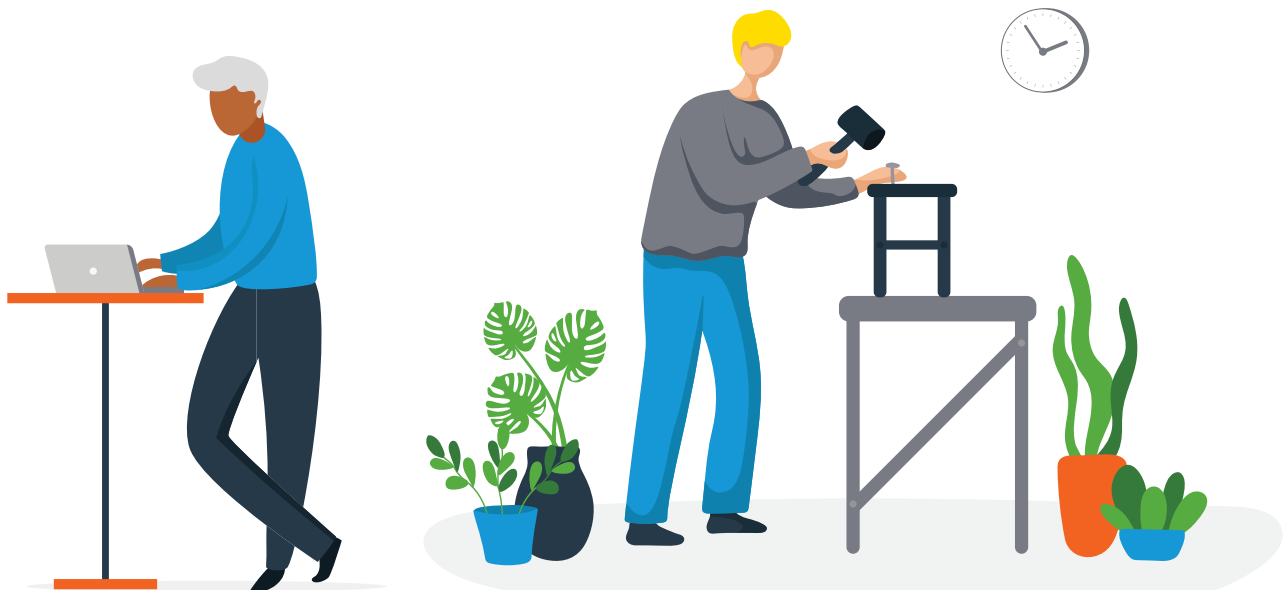
Companies also struggle with measuring the value of their workplace giving programs. More than half of companies report that they are not effective or are unsure how effective they are at measuring the value of their programs.

This may be why more than a quarter of companies—28%—plan to implement new tools to manage their programs in the next two years.



28% plan to **implement new tools** in the next two years

Tools, especially online solutions that integrate with a company’s employee benefits platform, allow companies to easily and efficiently track match dollars, volunteer hours, and overall employee engagement. These types of platforms save companies time and money, while providing robust reports that can help the company better understand and communicate the impact their workplace giving programs have on their communities.



# Tips and Takeaways

These findings demonstrate that workplace giving programs are as varied as the companies that offer them, but also that best practices can be applied regardless of program age, budget, or company size. Below are some practical tips and takeaways to consider for your workplace giving program.



## **Where your program lives should be determined by your goals.**

Be thoughtful about your goals and how you structure your program internally so that objectives are appropriately aligned. If your focus is attracting and retaining talent, your program should be in the human resources department. If you are most concerned about maintaining good ties with the community, consider housing the program in your external affairs department. If you want to be sure your customers are aware of your work, the marketing or communications team might be a good place to house the program. And for the best results, work and communicate cross-functionally, so that each department realizes the benefits of the program.



## **Set goals for your workplace giving program.**

Whether you establish a goal for number of employees who participate, number of volunteer hours served, amount of match funds given, or amount of in-kind goods donated, set goals and ensure you have the ability to track and report on your company's progress toward them.



## **Utilize tools that allow you to measure program impact.**

There are a number of tools that allow you to track your workplace giving activities. However, some of the most effective tools allow companies to track all aspects of their workplace giving programs, from employee donations to volunteer hours, match dollars, and company contributions. Many companies self-administer their programs but say they lack the tools and resources to manage them effectively.



## **Promote your program often and via many channels for better employee participation.**

Email. Intranet. On-site signage. Social media. Magazines. These are all great ways to tell employees about your workplace giving program. If you can't communicate year-round, consider a time-bound campaign, which can help create a sense of urgency among employees. And don't forget that one of the best channels for spreading the word is your employees themselves. Peers are great influencers and excitement is contagious.



## **Make it easy for employees to participate and be sure they are able to engage in ways that are meaningful to them.**

Recognize that some employees would rather donate time than money, and vice versa, and that most employees like supporting organizations that are meaningful to them personally. Also, allowing employees to utilize a one-stop-shop type of tool that allows them to track their giving, volunteering, and match dollars is a great way to encourage engagement and create enthusiasm. Giving is personal, and your program should enable a personalized experience.

## **Methodology**

This research is based on responses from 138 individuals representing companies of various sizes from a wide range of industries. These results have a margin of error of  $\pm 7.0\%$  at the 90% confidence level. The research was conducted via an online survey fielded by Artemis Strategy Group from October 23 through December 23, 2019. No participant was compensated for their involvement.

## **About Fidelity Investments**

Fidelity Investments is an industry leader in delivering investment and benefits solutions that help drive better results for companies and their employees. Fidelity has built an integrated, configurable platform designed to enable employees to easily donate to or volunteer with causes they care about most. Our robust Giving Marketplace platform helps you bring social responsibility into the workplace without the burden of complex, time-consuming administration so that you and your employees can make a powerful impact with minimal lift. [www.fidelityworks.com/s/giving](http://www.fidelityworks.com/s/giving)

## **About ACCP**

The Association of Corporate Citizenship Professionals is the membership association for companies committed to corporate citizenship, and a career-long resource for purpose-driven professionals. ACCP advances the field of corporate citizenship and serves as a strategic resource for its community of impact-driven professionals. Our 225+ member companies—including Fortune 500s, mid-size companies, small businesses and start-ups—gain access to some of the field's most practical insights, relevant tools, and meaningful connections that help them identify and understand trends, improve their results, and expand their impact. [www.accp.org](http://www.accp.org)

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