

Session Summary

Small Actions, Big Impact: A Path to Success in the Virtual World, Volunteering and Missions

Your people want more ways to support their communities, connect with each other and take action on the pressing issues they care about. And the shift to the virtual world has not made it easy. See how you can build connection and culture in a virtual setting — one act of Goodness at a time. By engaging your people in new ways through Volunteering and Missions, you can win in the virtual world and empower your people in meaningful ways!

Hosts

Steph Thompson, Product Marketing Manager, Benevity

Susan Keith Bleekman, Director, Goodness Solutions, Benevity

Attendees

420 attendees

Key Takeaways

1. Volunteering has been turned upside down by the pandemic, which has caused lots of innovation and experimentation to invigorate volunteering. The definition of impact has expanded beyond time and money and our clients looked at how they could support their colleagues and communities in a way that aligns with their company culture and goals.
2. Engagement became about focusing on connection in a disconnected world. Sharing stories and connecting has become so much more important than ever before.
3. Collective acts of Goodness have helped create a culture of purpose. Companies have pulled all of their tools together to focus on collective impact for important social and business imperatives.

Session Notes

- **Expanding the definition of impact**

Missions was used as a tool to educate, inspire and encourage employees to get engaged with social justice actions. This feature showed a 300% growth in actions taken in 2020 compared to 2019. Missions can be a gateway for greater Goodness, based on our analysis that shows an increase of overall participation when Missions is the first touchpoint.

The definition of volunteering was expanded to include smaller acts of goodness and we ended up logging 8 million hours of volunteering across Benevity's clients in 2020, down only 18% from 2019. We

added an integration with VolunteerMatch to include a database of options for virtual volunteering to engage your teams, which helped contribute to this number of hours logged in 2020.

We've expanded our content to include even more challenges and Missions to tie into mental health, sustainability, community engagement and equity issues.

Some themes we saw from clients who wanted to expand their impact:

- Small acts of Goodness, like buying groceries or making cards
 - Health and wellbeing, like mental health and walkathons
 - Mentorship and skill-based programs, reaching out to youth and rural communities
 - Learning and awareness, by hosting panels with strategic cause partners
 - ESG and SDG goals, and thinking about how these relate to business goals
 - Strategic initiatives around DEI, focusing on small but meaningful actions that can help move equity initiatives like Black Lives Matter forward
- **Deepening connection**

Creating virtual spaces will allow your employees to become the storytellers of their own experiences by giving them a channel to share stories, whether it's on social media, Spark, internal chat tools or team meetings.

Use our new Activity Streams feature on the Benevity app to allow employees to upload photos to volunteer opportunities. This feature can be enabled in your admin settings in Spark.

Co-create your program with your people by asking your teams what they would like to see, and what causes are resonating right now. This can lead to increased engagement and spread innovation and motivation.

- **Collaborate for purpose and collective acts of Goodness**

Offer new forms of rewards and recognition.

Engage with your employee resource groups to get help defining actions employees can take on social justice initiatives.

Support your communications teams to understand the "why" of these initiatives so that you can celebrate the impact of your program internally and externally, and its important place in your culture.

Q&A Discussions and Conversations

- **What rewards help teams to engage in Missions?**

At Benevity, we had a draw to hear Michelle Obama speak. Every Mission activity completed was one entry in the draw.

- **What are best practices for essential and manufacturing workers?**

Think differently about virtual opportunities to include outside of the box ideas like walkathons. Encourage those teams to access Spark via our mobile app, to engage with photos or time tracking right after volunteering is finished.

- **How can we track acts of kindness and make sure the hours are legitimate?**

Set a time limit around the campaign so it doesn't run all year and set clear limits around what is eligible.