Designing Effective Corporate Volunteering Programs

How Companies Can Achieve Corporate Volunteering Program Goals

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Master Thesis

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Executive Summary

The practice of employees volunteering through the workplace, commonly known as corporate volunteering, has gained popularity in recent years. With companies being urged to behave socially responsible and show their active involvement in the community, the engagement of employees in charitable initiatives has aided firms in strengthening their image of “doing good”. However, the establishment of programs surrounding corporate volunteering initiatives has also benefited firms personally. The virtues of supporting the community accrue at both the organizational and individual level. While companies gain from important drivers of firm performance such as organizational commitment and employee retention, its employees feel better work-life balance and a sense of meaning and fulfillment. Corporate volunteering is considered to be a “win-win-win” situation for non-profit organizations, companies, and employees. Still, in order to realize the full potential of corporate volunteerism, companies are advised to strategize their efforts. Setting goals and tracking progress will help firms to maximize the return on their investment in corporate volunteering programs. After all, these programs come in all forms and shapes, and decisions must be made on what design will be optimal for obtaining desired results.

Even though the path from designing corporate volunteering programs to obtaining corporate volunteering goals seems relatively straightforward, little remains known on how this process unfolds. Where adapting programs to improve employee engagement has received considerable attention, literature on how to accomplish other goals has been falling behind. Those studies that have sought to understand what constitutes a successful corporate volunteering program have either focused on only one goal (organizational commitment) or on the perspective of another party (non-profit organization). With the firm being principally responsible for setting up corporate volunteering initiatives, this study deems more research is needed to explain how companies can design effective programs. It has aimed to generate new theory in the field of corporate volunteering by researching the relationship between corporate volunteering program design and corporate volunteering program goals. In the context of the Dutch volunteering scene, 20 in-depth interviews have been conducted with individuals in charge of corporate

volunteerism at companies, non-profit organizations, and intermediaries.

The results of this study confirm earlier findings on the possible design elements a firm has at its disposal and the goals it may have in mind when establishing a corporate volunteering program. At the same time, it has advanced the field of corporate volunteering by uncovering the links between the inputs (design elements) and outputs (achievement of goals) of corporate volunteering. When directing their program to serve the community, firms should pay particular attention to their collaboration with the non-profit organizations they wish to support. On the contrary, the achievement of company-serving goals is facilitated not by focusing on firm-NPO partnerships but by targeting external communications (for reputational benefits) or by operating skill-based, mission-aligned programs (for value chain improvements). Firms wishing to improve bonding among employees should design activities performed in teams, while those aiming for large-scale participation should create easily accessible events, provide adequate information, and give employees decision control over design issues. Finally, offering local, social work activities that are different from regular tasks will contribute to the achievement of the employee-serving goal of employee development. These findings provide ground for further research on the topic of designing successful corporate volunteering programs, as well as give practitioners a practical guide for obtaining its desired results.

Key words: Corporate volunteering, employee volunteering, corporate volunteering programs, corporate volunteering program design, corporate volunteering program goals, volunteering management, corporate community involvement

Acknowledgements

Coming from a background focused on numbers and money-making, the choice for a master's thesis on volunteerism gave plenty puzzled looks. Still, the desire to do something that sparked an interest in me loomed larger than the fear of the unknown, and six months later I can finally say I did it. The delivery of this thesis marks the end of a chapter, one that will always bring back fond memories. However, I'm a firm believer that anything we do in life does not only come from within but is shaped to a large extent by those around you. With that in mind, I would like to take this opportunity to thank those that have guided me during these past months.

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Second, I would like to thank my co-reader Prof. Alexander Maas. Alexander, your feedback has been invaluable in ensuring not only the bigger picture is there but also that all the details are right. By raising questions on methodological issues, you have challenged me to think not only of whether what I was doing was right but also understand *why*. I hope to match your ability of critical thinking one day.

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List of Abbreviations

BCI Business Community Involvement

CCI Corporate Community Involvement

CFP Corporate Financial Performance

CSEV Company Support for Employee Volunteering

CSP Corporate Social Performance

CSR Corporate Social Responsibility

CV Corporate Volunteering

ESV Employer-Supported or Employer-Sponsored Volunteering

EV Employee Volunteering

FTE Full-Time Equivalent

NPO Non-Profit Organization

PV Personal Volunteering

VFI Volunteering Functions Inventory

Chapter 1

Introduction

The benefits of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives seem boundless.

> 'As a CSR initiative, corporate volunteerism has the potential to improve the firm's perception within the community, to benefit society at large, to become an attractive employer to those interested in social concerns, to improve corporate culture, and to build a positive reputation for "doing good".' (Caligiuri, Mencin, & Jiang, 2013, p. 827)

Indeed, the practice of CSR is unmistakable in contemporary business management. Whether it be reducing carbon footprints or donating cash for disaster relief, the public is increasingly demanding corporations to consider not just financial pay-offs but also their environmental and social footprints (Jones, Willness, & Madey, 2014). With the competitive landscape now including additional benchmarks, the question is no longer *if* firms should behave socially responsible but *how* they will do so (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). Where corporate philanthropy has been the conventional way of displaying charitable behaviour, the reputation of mere cash donations has deteriorated with increasing concerns about the authenticity of this generosity (Bulter & McChesney, 1998). The decline of traditional philanthropy has paved the way for new initiatives to stay ahead of the game. Passive funding has evolved into more active forms of gifting known as corporate community involvement (CCI) (Hess, Rogovsky, & Dunfee, 2002). In particular, the engagement of employees in charitable giving has created the latest movement in community involvement: corporate volunteering (CV). The facilitation of volunteering through the workplace has given social activities a place in business contexts (van der Voort, Glac, & Meijs, 2009) and has remodeled volunteering management to now include the role of third parties (Haski-Leventhal, Meijs, & Hustinx, 2010). CV has been one of the fastest growing areas in volunteering (Grant, 2012) and charitable giving (Pajo & Lee, 2011) in North-America and Western-Europe. Moreover, a staggering 93% of 252 of the world's largest firms reported to having a CV program in place in 2017 (CECP, 2018). Clearly, the adoption of CV programs has become a valuable tool for firms in demonstrating community involvement and is expected to

continue being one with firms increasingly being called upon to solve social problems (de Gilder, Schuyt, & Breedijk, 2005).

Firms have good reason to support their employees in volunteerism. Other than being able to contribute to society, CV allows companies to simultaneously pursue business goals and therefore Porter and Kramer (2002, p. 7) speak of 'a convergence of interests'. CV has been shown to contribute to important indicators of firm performance such as company reputation (Basil, Runté, Easwaramoorthy, & Barr, 2009), organizational commitment (Peterson, 2004), and employee retention (Jones *et al.*, 2014). In the end, CV programs are thought to benefit everyone involved: a "win-win-win" situation (Brown & Ashcraft, 2005; Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013). However, in order to maximize the potential for CV programs to serve the community, companies, and employees, companies are urged to think of their social efforts more like business concerns: strategically (Boccalandro, 2009; Points of Light Foundation, 2005). The notion that strategy is key to organizational success is well-established (Chandler, 1962), and the same rationale should be applied to CSR initiatives such as CV (Porter & Kramer, 2002). Before establishing CV programs, firms should contemplate their desired results from carrying out CV activities, whether oriented towards the community, company, or employees (Benjamin, 2001). With its goals in mind, companies then have a myriad of choices to make for the design of its CV program. In fact, six elements were identified to cover the spectrum of possible instruments companies have at their disposal for designing CV programs. These include choices relating to program management, partnerships with non-profit organizations, recruitment and retention of volunteers, the volunteering activity, incentives and support, and performance evaluation.

Still, while much has been done to develop a sound business for the use of CV (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017), scholars are concerned it may not be living up to its full potential yet (Booth, Park, & Glomb, 2009; Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013). After all, CV programs are an investment and in order to generate real results, firms have to make decisions on where to commit their resources (Hess *et al.*, 2002). The design of a CV program impacts its eventual outcomes (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013; Meijs, Tschirhart, Ten Hoorn, & Brudney, 2009), yet little is known about the dynamics behind a successful CV program (Rodell, Breitsohl, Schröder, & Keating, 2016). While extant research has been done on how firms can create programs that lead to employee engagement in CV activities (Booth *et al.*, 2009; Grant, 2012; Meijs *et al.*, 2009; Peterson, 2004), knowledge on how to achieve other goals is lacking. A study done by Roza, Haski-Leventhal, and Meijs (2015) has investigated the impact of several CV program design choices on individual and organizational outcomes but has done so from the perspective of the non-profit. As such, the viewpoint of the originator of CV programs—the firm—remains largely unexplored. For this

reason, more theory is deemed necessary on the relationship between CV program inputs and CV program outputs (Breitsohl & Ehrig, 2017; Peterson, 2004; Roza *et al.*, 2015).

This study aspires to close this gap in knowledge by solving the following research question:

RQ How can companies design effective corporate volunteering programs?

As firms can aim to use CV for different reasons, the notion of "effective" is contingent upon the specific goals it has in mind (Meijs *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, the main question has been broken down into several sub-questions. Firstly, this study will seek to uncover the goals that companies have in mind when establishing CV programs. Then, it will address the scope of possible CV program designs, bringing to light the specific elements a firm has at its disposal. Lastly, it will look for the relationship between CV program goals and CV program design.

SQ1 What are the goals of corporate volunteering programs?

SQ2 What are the design elements of corporate volunteering programs?

SQ3 What is the relationship between the goals and design elements of corporate volunteering programs?

By linking design elements to resultant outcomes, the aim is to generate new theory in the field of CV as well as to give companies guidance in adapting their CV program to produce desired results. Based on the thought that the reality of CV is context-specific and complex (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009), this study has taken a mixed deductive-inductive approach and chosen for the use of qualitative research. It is placed in the context of the Netherlands, following the relative novelty of CV programs in this setting (Hoolwerf & Schuyt, 2017) and the need for balancing the Northern-American dominance in CV literature (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017). Through 20 in-depth interviews with individuals managing CV initiatives in companies, non-profit organizations, and intermediaries, this study has sought answers to what constitutes an effective CV program.

In finding the solution to this issue, this thesis is structured as follows. To start with, Chapter 2 will present a comprehensive review of the current state of literature in the field of CV, establishing the foundation of this study. At the same time, it will seek preliminary answers to what CV program goals firms have in mind and how they can design their CV program. Then, Chapter 3 will outline how this study will go about retrieving relevant knowledge. It will provide details on the beliefs at the root of this study, the research approach and strategy taken, as well as the exact data collection and analysis methods employed. Next, Chapter 4 will present the

findings that have resulted from the research conducted, together with the models that were constructed by virtue of it. Finally, Chapter 5 will use these results to answer the main question, as well as discuss its implications and provide recommendations for further research. Figure 1.1 gives an overview of the structure of this thesis.

CHAPTER 1	Introduction	
CHAPTER 2	Literature Review	SQ1 & SQ2 (preliminary)
CHAPTER 3	Research Methodology	
CHAPTER 4	Results	SQ1, SQ2 & SQ3
CHAPTER 5	Conclusion and Discussion	Main question

Figure 1.1: The structure of this thesis
Source: This study

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Corporate Volunteering: A History of CSR and CCI

Although the idea that companies have responsibilities to society other than mere profit-making, most commonly known as *corporate social responsibility* (CSR), has been around for centuries, its importance on research agendas is a phenomenon of recent times (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). CSR literature has originated from different fields (*e.g.*, marketing, organizational theory, human resource management, strategy), and has been analysed on several levels (individual, organizational, institutional) (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012). While scholars differ in their interpretations of CSR, a commonly adopted definition is: 'Context-specific organizational actions and policies that take into account stakeholders' expectations and the triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental performance' (Aguinis, 2011, p. 933). The effect of CSR on company performance has been a topic of much debate, raising the question of companies' abilities to meet social, environmental *and* financial expectations (Orlitzky, Schmidt, & Rynes, 2003). While some strongly believe in the positive effects of corporate social performance (CSP) on corporate financial performance (CFP) (e.g. Cochran & Wood, 1984; Waddock & Graves, 1997), others emphasize the lack of impact or even negative effect that focusing on activities other than business may have (e.g. Barnett & Salomon, 2006; Griffin & Mahon, 1997). In an attempt to explain these contradicting results, both Margolis, Elfenbein, and Walsh (2009) and Orlitzky *et al.* (2003) have worked on consolidating research on the CSP-CFP performance link. They conclude that inconsistency in methodology and measurement are the main drivers for conflicting research outcomes, and the overall effect of CSR on company performance is (moderate but) positive.

Nevertheless, the eventual success of a company's CSR strategy relies heavily on the actual activities it performs. Carroll and Shabana (2010) define four different categories of CSR to organize companies' activities, namely economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary/philanthropic.

While companies are traditionally expected to perform according to economic and legal standards, the call for ethics has been of increased focus over the past centuries and even more recently philanthropic aspirations have been added to this list. Corporate philanthropy started off as a mostly passive activity with companies donating granting funds to charity, yet has taken another turn in recent times. Donations of after-profit cash have been the topic of much debate on the authenticity of this generosity, with issues such as tax motivation or senior executive pet charities being questioned by stakeholders (Bulter & McChesney, 1998). As such, following the thought that 'people need help solving their problems, not just money' (Hess *et al.*, 2002, p. 113), corporate giving has evolved into a more active form described as *business* or *corporate community involvement* (BCI/CCI). Following van der Voort *et al.* (2009), CCI is interpreted as 'the donation of funds, the contribution of goods and services, and the volunteering of time by company employees that is aimed toward non-profit and civic organizations' (p. 312). It can be seen as the investment of five M's: 1) money, 2) means, 3) mass, 4) media, and 5) manpower—also known as *corporate volunteering* (CV) (Meijs & van der Voort, 2004).

The first to mention the concept of employees volunteering time as part of company programs have been Burke, Logsdon, Mitchell, Reiner, and Vogel in the 1980s in their research on community activities in the United States. While the donation of funds still lead the charts as most common form of contributing, the use of CV was already recognized as an increasingly valuable means to support the community. Already one-third of the companies at the time (1986) used formal volunteering programs, and another 40% acknowledged their activities in an informal way. Hess *et al.* (2002) identify three sources for the emergence of greater involvement of firms in community issues: 1) competitive advantage through improved company reputation, 2) pressure from stakeholders to behave more morally, and 3) increased ability of the private rather than public sector to solve social problems. For one, CCI initiatives benefit from greater reputational gains as they are less likely to be seen as self-centred than cash donations (Bulter & McChesney, 1998). These assets can prove pivotal when entering new markets, as local communities will develop goodwill for companies that help advance their prosperity and consequently will show less opposition to their operations (Hess *et al.*, 2002). Then, changing preferences of the public regarding moral behaviour in businesses has called for larger community engagement; 89% of working Americans state they prefer to work for companies that facilitate volunteering opportunities (Deloitte, 2017). However, the establishment of CV programs may also be viewed as a competitive response, as firms increasing their involvement will prompt their adversaries to do the same in order to keep up (Hess *et al.*, 2002). At the same time, competition may not be confined to the private domain; valuable capabilities and resources give businesses an advantage over the public sector in solving societal issues (Hess *et al.*, 2002). This trend is

expected to last with the continuing decline of the welfare state in many Western countries (Basil *et al.*, 2009).

With community involvement here to stay, van der Voort *et al.* (2009) urge firms to reflect on how to effectively manage the internal and external pressures for undertaking CCI. The move from "bottom-up enthusiasm" to "CCI as standard business practice" has steered community involvement from individual acts driven by personal preferences to a business concern under higher management responsibility. These two opposing perspectives of managing CCI—an individual, bottom-up versus a strategic, top-down approach—lead to the belief that putting community involvement in the context of business may be a double-edged sword. In particular, questions on the appropriateness of blurring the boundaries between employees' private (where volunteering is traditionally done) and professional lives, as well as the seemingly involuntary nature of participation are raised. Nonetheless, considering the established involvement of companies in the community, management is compelled to address the accompanying difficulties. Van der Voort *et al.* (2009) emphasize the large role of CV because of a general trend towards a greater role for employees in CCI and corresponding increase in challenges that managers face in this active involvement. Since publishing their article in 2009, CCI literature has continued to steer towards CV as important determinant for companies' CSR and CCI actions, and eventual CSP-CFP performance.

2.2 What Makes a Corporate Volunteer Different

2.2.1 Defining Corporate Volunteering

Recognizing the growing importance of CV, it is imperative to understand its concept and how it differs from more traditional types of volunteering. A wide range of definitions of CV exist; corporate volunteering is also known as *employee volunteering* (EV), *employer-supported volunteering* (ESV), *employer-sponsored volunteering* (idem), *corporate involvement in volunteering*, and *company support for employee volunteering* (CSEV) (Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac, 2015; Meijs *et al.*, 2009; van der Voort *et al.*, 2009). Although these interpretations of CV seem similar, there are some notable differences between them.

On the one hand, employee volunteering is generally used as a broader definition, defined by Rodell *et al.* (2016, p. 57) as:

Employee Volunteering

Employed individuals giving time during a planned activity for an external non-profit or charitable group or organization

There are three key characteristics of employee volunteering. Firstly, employee volunteering constitutes an active involvement of the employee. This sets it apart from financial donations, which typically do not require more effort than writing a check, or more technologically advanced, setting up a direct debit. Secondly, rather than being an impromptu deed, it is a planned activity and as such requires prior consideration. However, this does not imply it must be for the long-term; a one-day event is also considered volunteering. Thirdly, the activity takes place through an external organization. While the organization can be incorporated in different ways (*e.g.*, non-profit organization (NPO), non-governmental organization (NGO), charity, trust, or fund), it must be the target of volunteering activities to be considered compatible with employee volunteering. All in all, employee volunteering can be seen as an umbrella term, encompassing both employees volunteering through the workplace (*corporate volunteering*, CV), as well as employees volunteering on their own initiative (*personal volunteering*, PV) (Rodell *et al.*, 2016).

On the other hand, the definitions of CV, ESV, and CSEV focus specifically on the part of employee volunteering that deals with companies. Considering the most commonly adopted is CV, and the focal point of this study is the corporation rather than employee, the definition that will be used in this study is as follows (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017, p. 240):

Corporate Volunteering

The encouragement and facilitation of volunteering in the community through the organization by which an individual is employed

CV does not necessarily take place during work hours—instead, it is defined by the support that corporate volunteers receive from the company they are employed at. In contrast, personal volunteers engage in volunteering without employer involvement. The latter can be seen as the traditional view on volunteering, also known as community volunteering, separating the corporate realm from the personal sphere (de Gilder *et al.*, 2005). However, it is still seen as part of employee volunteering, as it is an *employed* individual that is committed to volunteering (see Figure 2.1).

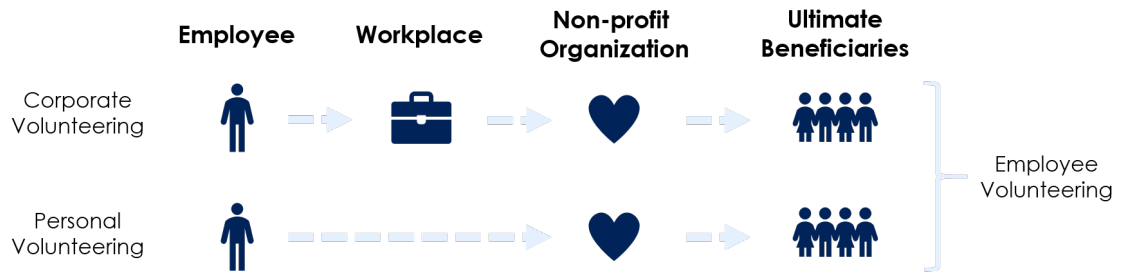


Figure 2.1: Types of volunteering
Source: Rodell *et al.* (2016)

Diving deeper into the differences between CV and PV, van Schie, Guentert, and Wehner (2011) compare the five core characteristics of PV with those of CV. According to them, personal volunteering is 1) organized, 2) personal, 3) unpaid, 4) beneficial to other parties, and 5) includes an investment of time. They conclude that both forms of volunteering are the same in terms of that they are organized (albeit differently) and require an investment of time (inherent to the activity). However, they differ in the three remaining aspects. Firstly, while PV is initiated by the employee itself, CV programs are typically instituted by employers and hence less of a "personal" choice. Secondly, although corporate volunteers do not get paid directly for volunteering, a share of companies allow employees to volunteer during labour time meaning volunteers indirectly receive remuneration. Lastly, even though the focal point of CV is benefiting the community and public good, the involvement of the company may raise questions on the motives behind the program (for more on the goals of CV, see Section 2.4.1).

While most studies distinguish only two volunteering types, Peloza and Hassay (2006) point out three different forms of volunteerism: 1) *extra-organizational*, 2) *inter-organizational*, and 3) *intra-organizational*. Even though they seem alike to PV and CV, Peloza and Hassay believe there are substantial differences within CV requiring further delimitation. The first, extra-organizational volunteerism, can be considered the same as PV: an individual chooses an organization he or she identifies with and volunteers outside of working hours. The second and third forms of volunteerism, inter- and intra-organizational, can both be seen as types of CV considering employees receive employer support in both situations. However, they differ in the way they are set up. In the case of inter-organizational volunteerism, the employee drives the CV program and chooses a charity of their liking. As this approach is mostly bottom-up, the role of the employer remains largely passive: 'Volunteer initiatives are supported by, but not

strategically-aligned with the firm' (Peloza & Hassay, 2006, p. 359). Philanthropic aspirations of employees are seen as more important than the goals and strategy of the firm. Conversely, in intra-organizational volunteerism the cause is employer-selected (top-down) and part of a strategically-aligned volunteering program.

Finally, Roza *et al.* (2015) extend the literature on CV by proposing that it should not only include employees that are currently employed. Roza *et al.* assert the importance of considering alternative groups of corporate volunteers, in particular those that are about to enter or leave the organization. The traditional view on CV focuses on "the organization by which an individual is employed", confining the pool of volunteers to those within the company. By taking a broader view and including prospective employees, as well as employees retiring or leaving for other jobs, companies will be able to receive additional benefits (for a detailed description, please refer to Section 2.3). The approach taken is introduced as 'corporate involvement in volunteering' and described as follows (Roza *et al.*, 2015, p. 5):

> **Corporate Involvement in Volunteering**
>
> Companies' responsiveness to volunteering, ranging from formally recognizing volunteering by (prospective) employees or to actively facilitate or organizing volunteer opportunities for their employees

2.2.2 Corporate Volunteering Programs

Taking into account the differences within CV as well as between CV and other types of volunteering, the key player in facilitating CV efforts is the company. Whereas CV itself deals with the act of an employee giving time, a CV *program* describes the structure in which this activity takes place. Following Tschirhart (2005, p. 16), it is defined as:

> **Corporate Volunteering Program**
>
> The formal and informal policies and practices that employers use to encourage and help employees to volunteer in community service activities

The roles that companies play in setting up and leading CV programs differ greatly; companies are flexible in the types of support they choose to lend to their corporate volunteers. There are a number of choices that companies must make in order to design their CV programs, such as whether to allow time off or provide company resources (Basil *et al.*, 2009). These decisions are

mostly guided by the goals that companies aim to achieve when designing their CV programs (see Section 2.4).

In line with Peloza and Hassay (2006), Roza *et al.* (2015) and van der Voort *et al.* (2009) categorize CV programs according to the role the company chooses to play—passive or active. However, they use a different set of definitions: *employee-led* and *employer-led*. Employee-led CV is what Peloza and Hassay refer to as inter-organizational volunteerism, while employer-led CV relates to intra-organizational volunteerism. These terms will be used throughout the rest of this study considering their relative simplicity, and the following definitions are attached to them (Roza *et al.*, 2015, p. 13):

> **Employee-led Corporate Volunteering Program**
>
> Employees select the charities for which they wish to volunteer, receiving passive support from the company
>
> **Employer-led Corporate Volunteering Program**
>
> The employer selects the charity and is proactive in the development of strategic volunteer opportunities for its employees

Whereas the distinction between employee- and employer-led CV programs may seem clear-cut from these definitions, in reality CV programs exist along a wide spectrum as opposed to two single extremes. This range can be visualized as follows, as adapted from Roza *et al.* (2015):

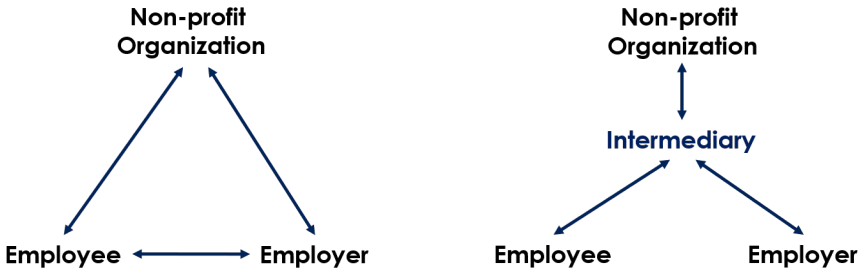
Figure 2.2: Spectrum of CV programs
Source: (Roza *et al.*, 2015)

It is important to spell out these differences between CV programs, as the dynamics behind them and the ability to generate desired results will vary (Meijs & van der Voort, 2004; Peloza &

Hassay, 2006). After all, 'not all forms of volunteerism are equal' (Peloza, Hudson, & Hassay, 2009, p. 384) and each design comes with its own advantages and disadvantages.

2.3 Cost-Benefit Analysis of Corporate Volunteering

Considering the increasing popularity of using CV programs in shaping CSR policy, research has been dedicated to build a business case around it (Basil, Runté, Basil, & Usher, 2011; Basil *et al.*, 2009; Boccalandro, 2009; Booth *et al.*, 2009; Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013; de Gilder *et al.*, 2005; Jones *et al.*, 2014; Pajo & Lee, 2011). Most studies within traditional volunteering literature have focused on volunteers and non-profits (Alfes, Antunes, & Shantz, 2017; Wilson, 2012), while research on CV has focused on personal benefits for employees and employers (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017). Few studies have considered the interplay among the three (Booth *et al.*, 2009), yet an ideal CV program is posited to provide benefits to all parties: a "win-win-win" situation (Brown & Ashcraft, 2005; Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013; de Gilder *et al.*, 2005; Peterson, 2004). After all, unique in CV is the role of the company, leading to not two but three key players in CV: 1) the employee, 2) the employer, and 3) the non-profit organization. The connections between these can be seen as a triad relationship, as visualized in Figure 2.3a (van Schie *et al.*, 2011). These three key players are in some cases assisted by another player: 4) the intermediary (see Figure 2.3b). This section will consider the roles that each of these players have in CV, as well as what each party may expect in terms of positive returns (benefits) and/or potential downsides (costs) when choosing to take part.



(a) Direct model **(b)** Indirect model

Figure 2.3: Models of corporate volunteering
Source: Source: Meijs and van der Voort (2004)

2.3.1 Employee

Role

In the most simplified form of CV, the employee is merely responsible for volunteering. Wilson (2012) defines volunteer as 'any activity in which time is given freely to benefit another person, group, or organization' (p. 215). In other words, an employee gives time within an organizational context to benefit another party (*i.e.*, the community). This is typically the case for employer-led CV programs, where the employer structures the program and the employee can choose among predetermined host organizations and missions. On the contrary, employee-led CV programs call for a larger role of the employee. Here, employees typically select a charity they would like to volunteer for and are the main contact for volunteering efforts (Peloza & Hassay, 2006). They have a larger part in planning the projects they are involved in, as well as whether and with whom to participate (Breitsohl & Ehrig, 2017). All in all, employee-led CV programs are flexible relationships, often foregoing the need for formal communication and commitment to only one non-profit (Booth *et al.*, 2009).

Regardless of the involvement of the employee in coordinating CV programs, corporate volunteers can take on different roles (see Table 2.1). Meijs and Brudney (2007) classify four types of volunteers, depending on the availability and resources and assets of each. Applying this to the field of CV (Roza, van Baren, Shachar, Meijs, & Hustinx, 2014), the first type are *sweat* volunteers: employees with limited time that apply common skills to volunteering assignments. They are particularly useful for assisting non-profit staff with routine tasks or for providing extra activities such as socials or outings. Their added value is derived from relieving non-profit staff of workload and providing clients with additional services (Roza, Shachar, Meijs, & Hustinx, 2017). However, employees can also create value for nonprofits when they apply their professional skills, as is the case for *specialist* volunteers. This type is commonly found in CV: professionals that would like to share their skills and knowledge but prefer episodic assignments due to time constraints (Meijs & Brudney, 2007). Nevertheless, in some cases employees may have more time resources available, whether they are supplied by the employer or expended from own reserves, giving them the ability to commit for longer time periods to the non-profit organization. Here, they can again make the choice to deploy professional skills or not. In case interim corporate volunteers rely solely on everyday skills and knowledge, they are classified as *supporter* volunteers. Similar to sweat volunteers, they typically support day-to-day activities of non-profit organizations, but they are also able to equip coaching or mentoring roles. While the supplement in help is useful for filling gaps in resources, these types of volunteers could also pose a threat: non-profit staff report feeling at risk of being replaced (Roza *et al.*, 2014). This

apprehension does not exist for the last type of volunteers, *consultant* volunteers, that contribute their expertise over longer periods of time. Corporate volunteers that take on this role are seen as the most valuable, as they experience the greatest increase in development (when using their specialist skills) and are able to make the largest long-term impact on non-profit organizations (when using a wide range of business skills) (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013).

	Temporary Commitment	Interim Commitment
Personal Skills	Sweat	Supporter
Professional Skills	Specialist	Consultant

Table 2.1: Types of corporate volunteers
Source: Meijs and Brudney (2007); Roza *et al.* (2014)

Benefits and Costs

When an employee chooses to participate in CV, it can experience the positive effects of its activities in two-fold: personally, and professionally. On a personal level, employees note feeling better work-life balance, enhanced self-esteem and self-worth, more appreciation for their lives, and positive energy (Tschirhart, 2005). The ability to perform activities outside the mundane work context is seen as "an escape from normality", contributing to decreased stress (Pajo & Lee, 2011). Emotions arising from helping improve the lives of others, also known as "warm glow", give corporate volunteers a sense of meaning and fulfilment (Geroy, Wright, & Jacoby, 2000). From a workplace perspective, employees benefit from capability development in the form of improved job-related skills and the development of social capital (Pajo & Lee, 2011). In addition, corporate volunteers are more engaged employees due to feelings of recognition and identification with their employer (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013). However, employees doing volunteer work not supported by the CV program could feel under-appreciated (de Gilder *et al.*, 2005).

2.3.2 Company

Role

As mentioned earlier, the presence of the company is distinctive for CV. In a similar fashion to the role of the employee, that of the company differs according to the form of CV the company employs. The degree of support an employer lends to its employees varies and is revisited by Meijs and van der Voort (2004) to show it consists of four categories of ascending involvement. Firstly, *recognition* depicts the situation in which a company shows it values volunteer work

done by employees but does not provide any support. The second form, *support*, represents CV programs in which companies make it easier for their employees to volunteer. The third option is *organization* and characterizes companies who are actively involved in organizing volunteering programs for their employees, such as by choosing non-profit organizations and volunteering assignments. Lastly, *sponsoring* calls for companies that let employees volunteer within work time and/or support them with resources. The precise choices that companies have when structuring their support for CV are discussed in Section 2.4.

Benefits and Costs

The work-related benefits that employees encounter have a positive spill-over to the work domain, providing the employer with benefits as well. Internally, employees involved in CV portray enhanced work attitudes such as greater organizational commitment, pride, and identification, as well as job satisfaction, productivity, and loyalty (Basil *et al.*, 2009; Geroy *et al.*, 2000; de Gilder *et al.*, 2005; Peterson, 2004). CV is an important contributor to building pro-social behaviour and company identities, likely to attract high-potential employees as they perceive the organization as more attractive (Pajo & Lee, 2011). Moreover, outcomes like these are related to company performance. In-role performance, organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and employee retention are shown to affect the bottom line (Jones *et al.*, 2014). A company's involvement in the community, such as CV, is positively related to return on assets (ROA) and return on investments (ROI) (Margolis *et al.*, 2009; Waddock & Graves, 1997). Furthermore, for CV programs where employees get to acquire job-related and job-specific skills (known as *skill-based* volunteering, see Meijs and Brudney (2007)), employers are able to save on training costs (Booth *et al.*, 2009; Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013). Externally, CV efforts, as element of a wider CSR profile, can enhance a company's image and reputation (Basil *et al.*, 2011; Peterson, 2004). By providing networking opportunities, it can strengthen relations with customers and the community (Basil *et al.*, 2009).

However, companies that engage in CV must strike a balance between managing employees and managing volunteers; employees volunteering during work time may take away valuable hours and are possibly distracted from their core business (Basil *et al.*, 2009). The resources that go into designing and maintaining CV programs and the relationships with non-profits pose a concern to companies (Basil *et al.*, 2011; Breitsohl & Ehrig, 2017). As remarked in Section 2.1, philanthropic activities are seen as discretionary signaling they are of lower importance to companies than their economic, legal, and ethical activities (Carroll & Shabana, 2010); CV programs use up resources that could have been employed to achieve other, more critical goals (Tschirhart & St Clair, 2005). Moreover, Reich (1998) argues that companies investing time and money in CSR initiatives such as CV take on responsibilities belonging to the government. This

could cause neglect on the part of governments, as well as contribute to changing expectations of what companies should be held accountable for. By all means, a firm's primary interest is its business and the corporate lens may not be suitable to solve social problems (Freeman & Liedtka, 1991). Another potential cost of CV programs is the image they portray to the outside world. Whereas many studies find positive effects of CV on a company's reputation, Meijs and van der Voort (2004) argue that companies can also be perceived as "showing off" and inappropriately blurring the lines between employee's personal and professional lives. Lastly, companies choosing particular causes to support (or exclude) risk 'alienating customers, donors, and/or employees' (Basil *et al.*, 2011, p. 62).

2.3.3 Non-profit Organization

Role

While the majority of literature on CV focuses on the employee and employer, less has been done to understand the position of the non-profit organization (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017). In line with the majority of CV literature, this study assumes that companies will partner with a non-profit rather than work together with ultimate beneficiaries directly (as portrayed in Figure 2.1). Other than saving the need to build relationships with numerous individuals instead of one organization, companies can achieve reputation and legitimacy gains by partnering with non-profits rather than beneficiaries (Jamali & Keshishian, 2009). As explained by Caligiuri *et al.* (2013): 'The goal for corporate volunteerism is that the employee volunteers' projects have an influence on the NGOs' that, in turn, positively affect the communities they serve' (p. 832). The rise in the perceived advantages of cross-sector partnerships has as such evolved volunteering management, with new actors like corporations seeking to contribute to the domain (Haski-Leventhal *et al.*, 2010). With non-profits having to consider additional interests, a range of relationship models developed. Businesses and non-profits can choose to work together directly (the *direct* model, see Figure 2.3a), or connect through an intermediary (the *indirect* model, see Figure 2.3b) (Meijs & van der Voort, 2004).

In the case where the non-profit and company are in direct contact, there are a variety of partnerships they can choose from. In particular, Austin (2010) traces three stages in the evolving relationship between employers and non-profits: 1) philanthropic, 2) transactional, and 3) integrative. As the first restricts itself mostly to the domain of corporate giving (in terms of money and materials), it falls outside the scope of CV. The second and third then represent the two extremes that a partnership can take. On the one hand, a *transactional* relationship is based purely on business; the company and non-profit organization pursue their own interests and

invest in CV to obtain individual benefits. On the other hand, an *integrative* relationship revolves around collectivism; the and non-profit act as true partners, setting goals together to create joint value. Haski-Leventhal *et al.* (2010) argue that, while the philanthropic and transactional stages may be more beneficial for employees as they are freer in choosing their own cause, integrative partnerships allow for the delivery of better services due to the strong firm-NPO collaboration and as such benefit the community more. Still, whichever the preferred form of partnering, the non-profit's main activities in CV are relationship management and volunteering management (Tschirhart & St Clair, 2005; van der Voort *et al.*, 2009). The organization will need to collaborate with the employer, as well as manage an additional pool of volunteers: corporate volunteers. Depending on the distribution of power between the non-profit organization and company, agreements have to be made on how to structure, select, and execute projects (Lee, 2011).

Benefits and Costs

Partnering with companies has advantages and disadvantages of its own. Looking at the organizational level, many non-profits have difficulties in obtaining a large enough pool of (suitable) volunteers and the gain in volunteering hours from corporate volunteers is hence much welcomed (Basil *et al.*, 2011, 2009). Employees that volunteer are more likely to volunteer in their personal life, as well as inspire others to volunteer—expanding the pool even further (de Gilder *et al.*, 2005). In addition, establishing relationships with companies allows non-profits to gain more credibility, opening the door to a network of new prospective donors, funders, and partners (Austin, 2010). Other than this, companies are able to supply volunteers with specific skill-sets that can improve the quality of services for the organization's clients (Peterson, 2004). The fresh perspective that corporate volunteers can give non-profits is a low-cost solution for high-skilled members (Benjamin, 2001). Zooming in on the individual level, non-profits benefit from enhancement of their staff members. Having additional volunteers allows for relief of staff workload and the ability to provide clients with added services (Roza *et al.*, 2017). In addition, involving volunteers from the corporate field can support learning in the organization's staff (Roza *et al.*, 2017). Finally, through non-profits, the community at large benefits from the help of additional manpower. By providing skilled helpers, corporate involvement plays an important role in addressing pressing societal issues through community service (Basil *et al.*, 2011; Pajo & Lee, 2011).

Nonetheless, non-profit organizations must proceed with caution when entering the terrain of CV. Firstly, they could fall prey to prioritizing corporate volunteers; this could lead to CV programs being designed to suit a firm's aspirations as opposed to the beneficiaries' needs

(Tschirhart & St Clair, 2005). Secondly, non-profits stand to risk conflicts between staff and corporate volunteers. When corporate volunteers carry out tasks otherwise performed by staff, staff members may feel at risk of being replaced or subject to cherry-picking practices. Notably, as Roza *et al.* (2017) affirm, 'Corporate volunteers are often called upon to carry out annual outings with beneficiaries, because their companies reimburse all expenses' (p. 13). Thirdly, participation in CV may leave non-profit organizations subject to transaction costs, whether they be direct (*e.g.*, material costs for CV projects) or indirect (*e.g.*, investment into additional human resources). Even more, in situations where corporate volunteers are not particularly skilled for the job at hand (as may be the case for maintenance work or taking care of disabled people), services delivered may be of lower quality and hence do more damage than good (Roza *et al.*, 2017).

2.3.4 Intermediary

Role

Some companies will not establish direct partnerships with non-profits but rather work with an intermediary, commonly referred to as the indirect model as portrayed in Figure 2.3b (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017; Meijs & van der Voort, 2004). The intermediary between non-profits and companies is usually a broker, functioning as a match-maker between the two. This type of organization will try to add value to the employer-volunteering relationship by facilitating the design of CV projects and supporting the creation of joint value (Lee, 2015). Intermediaries are particularly helpful for companies and non-profit organizations that lack experience and/or a network for organizing CV activities (Roza *et al.*, 2017). The complex nature of partnerships between companies and non-profits has sparked a growth in the use and importance of intermediaries (Stadtler & Probst, 2012). Nevertheless, the role of intermediaries has received scant attention in CV literature (Lee, 2015; Roza *et al.*, 2017). For this reason, the rationale behind its use from the *company* point of view will be explored further in Section 2.4.

2.3.5 Overview of the Benefits and Costs of Corporate Volunteering

The benefits and costs of CV are summarized in Table 2.3:

Player	Benefits	Costs
Employee	Better work-life balance Enhanced self-esteem and self-worth Increased life appreciation Positive energy Decreased stress Sense of meaning and fulfilment Improved job-related skills Development of social capital Increased employee engagement	Under-appreciated if charity not supported by employer
Company	Greater organizational commitment, pride and identification Job satisfaction, productivity and loyalty Attraction of high-potential employees Improved company performance Reduction in training costs Enhanced company image and reputation Improved relation with customers and community	Decreased availability of resources Increasing demands Potential negative effect on company image Risk of alienating customers, donors, and/or employees
Non-profit Organization	Gain in volunteering hours Increase in credibility Access to prospective donors, funders, and partners Enhanced quality of services Low-cost addition of high-skilled members Relief of staff workload Ability to provide clients with additional services Increased ability to address societal issues	Design of CV programs to suit employee rather than community needs Risk of conflict with staff Presence of transaction costs Reduced quality of services

Table 2.2: Overview of the benefits and costs of CV

Source: This study

2.4 What Companies Would Like to Achieve and How They Do So

2.4.1 Corporate Volunteering Program Goals

Section 2.3 has shown the potential that CV programs may have, giving companies plenty reason to set up a version of their own. Yet, if companies would like to create a successful CV program, they need to think strategically and identify their primary objectives: CV program goals (Boccalandro, 2009; Points of Light Foundation, 2005). The idea that formulating a strategy is key to organizational success is seeded in management literature (Chandler, 1962), and the design of CV programs should be no exception (Porter & Kramer, 2002). Indeed, companies are shown to have different motivations when starting CV programs, whether this be directed towards the community, their employees, and/or themselves (Benjamin, 2001). In accordance with the win-win-win concept as touched upon in Section 2.3, the following section will consider the desired results that companies may have when establishing and developing their CV program according to the three prevailing perspectives:

1. **Community**

   At the core of CV programs is the commitment to give back to the community, as seen in the definitions addressed in Section 2.2. The existence of CV programs is contingent upon firms' wishes to promote the public good (Boccalandro, 2009; van Schie *et al.*, 2011). However, as proposed by Austin (2010), employers will have different approaches to their relationship with non-profit organizations and as such diverge in the extent to which they want to contribute to society. Where some companies will simply like to meet the minimal expectations for engaging in CSR initiatives, others will go far and beyond by committing to making a long-lasting impact on the communities they operate in. The following section will consider the social goals a firm may aim at.

(a) *Community Involvement*

On the one hand, companies can aim to get involved in the community simply to meet societal demands (Basil *et al.*, 2009); expectations of stakeholders such as consumers, employees, and governments lead corporations to find new ways to develop and fill their CSR agenda, CV being one of them (Jones *et al.*, 2014; Lee, 2011). While it could be argued that firms aiming to do the bare minimum to show their social image could get away with traditional philanthropy, Section 2.1 has shown that stakeholder concerns about its legitimacy has compelled firms to pursue more active forms of community involvement in order to establish true credibility (Bulter & McChesney, 1998). Companies that use CV

in aforementioned way are considered to be taking a responsive approach to CSR, which involves two mechanisms: one, obtaining the image of the “good corporate citizen”, and two, mitigating (potential) harmful effects of firm operations. Community involvement in its simplest form allows companies to reap the benefits of being socially responsible, yet its advantages are expected to be limited and short-lived (Porter & Kramer, 2006).

(b) *Community Impact*

Instead, (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013) state that firms should not limit their social activities to involvement but rather aim for making a sustainable impact. Boccalandro (2009) recognizes the same, saying that ‘promoting public good is the [CV program]’s raison d’être. Without serving the social sector, [a CV program] would not be [a CV program] but simply a business initiative. In this regard, the public good is the primary interest of [a CV program]’ (p. 10). Already when Burke *et al.* (1986) published their article, companies were starting to become conscious of how their dollar giving could not only reach monetary targets but be used efficiently to solve real problems. For this, a strategic orientation to CSR is deemed desirable (Basil *et al.*, 2009). According to Porter and Kramer (2006), delivering real results requires firms to think of where it wants to contribute: ‘Companies are called upon to address hundreds of social issues, but only a few represent opportunities to make a real difference to society or to confer a competitive advantage. Organizations that make the right choices and build focused, proactive, and integrated social initiatives in concert with their core strategies will increasingly distance themselves from the pack.’ (p. 13). However, in speaking of aiming for community impact, it becomes clear that companies may have other concerns on their agenda. Indeed, Benjamin (2001) found that addressing community needs is the least frequently cited goal when companies are asked what motivates them to establish CV programs. Yet, it is number one when asked what words they would use to describe their program externally. This gives reason to believe that companies use their CV initiatives to achieve more than just impact.

Confirming the thought that companies want more with CV programs than helping the community, Boccalandro (2009) states that ‘serving business interests is central to an effective [CV program] because, paradoxically, it facilitates the program’s charitable impact’ (p. 15). Indeed, many companies set multiple objectives for their CV programs with community improvement just being one of them (Brown & Ashcraft, 2005; Lee, 2011; Meijs *et al.*, 2009). CV program administrators acknowledge that their main motivation for running CV programs is targeted either to employees or the corporation itself (Benjamin, 2001). The following goals will identify the

most pursued business concerns, divided between organizational (company) and individual (employee) level goals.

2. **Company**

(a) *Company Reputation*

Following Benjamin's (2001) observation that most companies would mention community benefits when advertising their CV program externally, the most commonly cited benefit of CV is enhanced company image or reputation (Basil *et al.*, 2011). Improving the relationship with the local community invokes positive responses from stakeholders such as customers and investors, giving the firm a comparative advantage in the market (Points of Light Foundation, 2005). The gain in reputation benefits is higher for CV as opposed to traditional corporate philanthropy (Hess *et al.*, 2002). In a study by Lee (2011), business managers indicated CV was indeed used as 'a tactic to market images of the "caring corporate citizen" and enhance corporate image' (p. 169). This image has the potential to improve existing customers relations, with some companies going as far as not sponsoring projects in areas where few customers are located (Benjamin, 2001). However, using CV as tool to improve company reputation can also attract *new* customers when corporate volunteers meet potential clients and allow them to experience the image first-hand (de Gilder *et al.*, 2005). The same mechanism can work for HR when recruiting employees, where the reputation for being engaged in the community can be the deciding factor for choosing one employer over the other (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2008). Yet, fixating on the image of CV could backfire as it could evoke scepticism on the legitimacy of the company's good deeds (Basil *et al.*, 2009). Hence, companies that would like to use CV to strengthen their reputation should proceed with caution.

(b) *Organizational Commitment*

A second goal that CV literature proposes companies generally have when establishing CV programs is organizational commitment, defined as 'An emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation' (Brammer, Millington, & Rayton, 2007, p. 1705). Organizational commitment relates to concepts such as organizational identification, employer loyalty and organizational pride; while nuances between these definitions exist, they all relate to an employee's attitude towards its employer and are positively affected by CV (de Gilder *et al.*, 2005). What is more, they are indicators for important workplace behaviours like in-role performance, employee turnover, absenteeism,

and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) (Breitsohl & Ehrig, 2017). A study by Bhattacharya *et al.* (2008) confirms this by showing that employee engagement in CSR initiatives like CV leads to pride in employees, which increases employee performance and decreases intentions to leave. Peterson (2004) similarly concludes that organizational commitment is higher for companies that have a CV program in place than those that do not. Bartel (2001) explains this with organizational identification theory, asserting that CV consists of two mechanisms that lead to employees feeling more positive about the organization they are employed at: 1) intergroup comparisons, and 2) intragroup comparisons. For one, CV activities allow employees to contrast themselves with clients (*intergroup*) and can 'validate or enhance members' positive evaluations of their organization (collective self-esteem) when they perceive that it has higher social status or more desirable or distinctive features relative to another group' (Bartel, 2001, p. 385). By gaining insight into their relatively advantageous position, employees will feel more appreciative of the organization they are part of. On the other hand, taking part in CV activities gives employees the opportunity to compare themselves with another (*intragroup*); emphasizing similarities between organizational members promotes the feeling of belonging to the in-group, again increasing organizational identification (Bartel, 2001). However, Gatignon-Turnau and Mignonac (2015) warn for unwanted side effects: companies that simultaneously promote public relations when running CV programs will not have employees feeling more committed, as they perceive their employer as pursuing self-serving purposes.

3. **Employee**

(a) *Employee Engagement*

> 'Engagement is above and beyond simple satisfaction with the employment arrangement or basic loyalty to the employer—characteristics that most companies have measured for many years. Engagement, in contrast, is about passion and commitment—the willingness to invest oneself and expend one's discretionary effort to help the employer succeed.' (Macey & Schneider, 2008)

While companies can aim to look better on the outside, they can also concentrate on the community indoors: its employees. Employees are the cornerstone of any corporation, and their engagement is positively related to organizational outcomes such as productivity and performance (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013). Companies that aspire to enhance employee engagement could adopt CV programs, as employee engagement is higher when employees think of their employer as a good corporate citizen (Glavas & Piderit, 2009). Carrying out CV makes a positive impact on satisfaction and morale by allowing employees to feel personally fulfilled by helping others and through introducing variety in work (Lee, 2011).

Furthermore, participating in volunteering activities allows employees to do something differently, supplying corporate volunteers with new energy and motivation that in turn improves job performance (de Gilder *et al.*, 2005; Rodell, 2013). Considering that many companies are struggling to keep their employees engaged in times of economic turmoil and rapidly changing business scenes, CV has become a powerful asset for boosting employee morale (Allen, Galiano, & Hayes, 2011).

(b) *Employee Development*

While realizing an engaged workforce unarguably benefits the company, CV programs can also be strategically valuable in another way: employee development (Lee, 2011). Booth *et al.* (2009) found that the number of hours volunteered for CV programs positively relates to employee skill acquisition, suggesting that volunteering activities entail more than simply giving. As touched upon in Section 2.3, CV can be seen as 'a low-cost solution answer to corporate training needs' (Geroy *et al.*, 2000, p. 281). CV draws upon skills and knowledge that employees may not have the chance to use in their day-to-day job, enabling them to develop new competencies (de Gilder *et al.*, 2005). On the one hand, CV activities provide training ground for applying and acquiring skills (Bartel, 2001). Geroy *et al.* (2000) identified the three most acquired skills from CV as 1) people skills, 2) management and organizational skills, and 3) time management skills. Some companies embed CV in their employee development plans (Boccalandro, 2009), while others employ it with the specific purpose of training juniors or management candidates for their forthcoming function (Lee, 2011). On the other hand, firms can target CV to the obtainment of relevant knowledge. Caligiuri *et al.* (2013) named community learning as an important developmental aspect of CV; exposure to new situations allows employees to gain knowledge regarding social, cultural, or economic issues and broaden their perspective, opportunities that are not abundant in the typical workplace (Geroy *et al.*, 2000). All in all, employers can generate business value by concentrating their CV efforts on the development of their employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013).

The different perspectives on CV program goals are pictured in Figure 2.4, showing their intersection as the proposed win-win-win situation, while the varying goals are shown in Figure 2.5.

Figure 2.4: Perspectives on CV program goals

Source: This study

While the goals are summarized as following:

1) Community

a) Community Involvement
b) Community Impact

2) Company

a) Company Reputation
b) Organizational Commitment

3) Employee

a) Employee Engagement
b) Employee Development

Figure 2.5: Overview of CV program goals

Source: This study

2.4.2 Corporate Volunteering Program Design

Having a desired result in mind is one point, but obtaining it is another. In order to achieve set goals, companies have to recognize the factors that influence them. The most cited determinant of CV program success is employee participation (Breitsohl & Ehrig, 2017; Grant, 2012; Peterson, 2004; van Schie *et al.*, 2011). After all, employee participation is necessary in order for CV programs to be sustained; as noted by van Schie *et al.* (2011, p. 123), there is 'no corporate volunteering without volunteers'. However, participation in CV is believed to be an intermediate goal, being just a single step in the way of achieving higher goals such as firm reputation, organizational commitment and employee engagement—and eventually firm performance. As such, the recruitment and retention of corporate volunteers is seen as only one component, complementing a range of other design elements that firms should bear in mind as their composition will determine a company's ability to achieve CV program objectives (Geroy *et al.*, 2000; Pajo & Lee, 2011; Sekar & Dyaram, 2017). Accordingly, this section will consider CV program design as a way for firms to steer their success. In particular, a review of literature on CV programs has uncovered the following six design elements:

1. **Program Management**

   The first and perhaps foremost design element of CV programs is program management. After all, the decision of who will be in control has implications for all other design elements. As described in Section 2.2.2, the management of a CV program can be top-down (employer-led) or bottom-up (employee-led). While employers tend to highlight the expected benefits for the company and its employees when shaping CV programs, employees weigh the needs for the community as heavier (Roza *et al.*, 2015). This section considers what choices companies have with regards to decision control, the daily coordination of CV programs, and the type of staff involved.

(a) *Decision Control*

Before launching a CV program, an important first choice needs to be made: who will be in charge. On the one hand, employer-directed CV programs tend to be more strategically aligned with the business itself as its management tends to be centralized and organized in a specialized division (Peloza & Hassay, 2006). In most cases, this will be a CSR unit that manages CV in addition to other forms of community involvement (Lee, 2011). However, companies can also govern CV through existing departments such as marketing, human resources, community relations, and public relations (Tschirhart, 2005). In few cases do firms establish separate volunteering coordination functions (Lee, 2011). On

the contrary, employee-led CV programs are decentralized and less standardized. They typically involve individual employees rather than business units and rely less on formal policies and procedures (Brown & Ashcraft, 2005). Granting decision-making authority to corporate volunteers gives a sense of autonomy which is shown to create greater organizational commitment and increase future intentions to volunteer (Breitsohl & Ehrig, 2017; Tschirhart & St Clair, 2005). CV programs that allow employees to self-select are believed to produce an *internalized volunteering identity*: employees that identify with being a volunteer are more likely to be committed to the program and bring about more meaningful contributions (van Schie, Gautier, Pache, & Güntert, 2018). Nonetheless, leaving matters only up to employees could create an unfocused CV program (Lee, 2011). Furthermore, deciding on manners such as charities before-hand could bring in potential corporate volunteers that are simply unaware of where their help is needed (Benjamin, 2001).

(b) *Coordination*

Other than decision control, the daily operation of CV programs can be in different hands. Coordinating CV programs can be done in several ways, varying in the degree of formality and the number of staff involved. Some businesses do not formally appoint persons in charge of CV efforts. In these cases, enthusiastic individuals step forward to take on responsibility in addition to their regular work—as usually takes place in employee-led CV programs (Lee, 2011). Other CV programs will assign the task of coordinating community initiatives, whether this be to an individual or a committee of individuals (Basil *et al*., 2009). When CV programs are run by individuals, these tend to come from senior management positions. Comparatively, those businesses that coordinate CV efforts through a committee typically comprise more general staff. Administering CV through a committee is believed to better promote the program within the company, as well as to gather input from a broader range of employees (Benjamin, 2001).

(c) *Type of Staff*

Even companies that appoint responsible persons for coordinating CV programs typically have them do so in conjunction with regular work activities. As such, a common problem in managing CV programs is a limited amount of staff time; few firms employ staff exclusively for coordinating CV efforts (Benjamin, 2001). However, according to Boccalandro (2009), successful management of CV programs does not necessarily require full-time positions but rather a minimum of two full-time equivalents (FTEs). Those involved in the program management of CV can be in-house employees—whether they are committing full-time

or part-time—or external hires such as consultants. In a research done by Benjamin (2001), one-quarter of volunteerism programs was found to use external consultants to compensate for the shortage in own staff.

2. **Partnerships with NPOs**

Once it is determined which party has decision control and who will coordinate the CV program, the organization that the company would like to partner with has to be chosen. As discussed in Section 2.3, companies can choose whether they want to loosely collaborate with partners or form a more integrative relationship. However, partnerships tend to grow organically, and there are other design choices that need to be addressed prior to developing lasting bonds. These choices include the type of organization, fit with the company, and the use of intermediaries.

(a) *Type of Organization*

Creating a positive impact on society can be done in numerous ways, and as such many different non-profit organizations and causes exist. While some non-profit organizations adopt a universal approach by creating volunteering opportunities for all types of causes, others single out focus areas. No precise typology on non-profit organizations exists in CV literature, yet most studies relate non-profit organizations to industries or sectors; examples include (in no particular order) health care, social services, sports and recreation, education and research, religion and professional services (Basil *et al.*, 2009; Booth *et al.*, 2009). A more practical study by CECP (2018) uses the Non-profit Program Classification (NPC) by identifying non-profits according to their purpose, leading to the following types: 1) civic and public affairs, 2) community and economic development, 3) culture and arts, 4) disaster relief, 5) education, higher, 6) education, K-12, 7) environment, 8) health and social services, and 9) other[1]. Within these types, companies can choose to champion specific areas; in 2016, the five most supported were STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), workforce/employment, environment, safety, and diversity and inclusion (CECP, 2018). It is common for firms to exclude political and religious types of non-profit organizations in order to avoid undesired spillover effects such as alienation of customers, brand loss, or negative attitudes (Basil *et al.*, 2011).

(b) *Fit with Company*

Considering the potential advantages of strategically choosing non-profit organizations,

[1]For more information on the NPC, please visit https://nccs.urban.org/classification/non-profit-program-classification-npc

more companies are picking organizations with which they "fit": 'Typically, the more closely tied a social issue is to the company's business, the greater the opportunity to leverage the firm's resources and capabilities, and benefit society' (Porter & Kramer, 2006, p. 10). There are several ways in which a company-organization fit is established. Firstly, there can be a fit with the company's wider CSR/CCI strategy (Basil *et al.*, 2009). In this case, companies will choose non-profit organizations it already engages with through other philanthropic endeavours such as cash donations or sponsorship. Secondly, a company can favour certain non-profit organizations due to their fit with its core business. Here, the focus will be on the ability to use business capabilities in serving the public good (Lee, 2011). However, close alignment between a company's business area and selected cause could provoke scepticism in consumers, particularly for firms with a negative reputation (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Thirdly, companies may select non-profit organizations for value congruence: organizations that match with a company's identity. Considering that "people make the place", employees' core values are expected to align with those of the employer; when a non-profit organization's identity is in alignment with the company, it will instinctively be in line with its employees thus increase the likelihood of internalization (Grant, 2012). The benefits of establishing a strategic fit are positive consumer response (Basil & Herr, 2006), deeper firm-NPO relationships (Peloza & Hassay, 2006), and ultimately improved economic and social impact (Porter & Kramer, 2002).

(c) *Use of Intermediaries*

As touched upon in Section 2.3, companies have the option to make use of a third party: the intermediary. Intermediaries can fulfil different functions for business non-profit collaborations, ranging from 'providing one-off volunteering activities through to developing comprehensive volunteering programmes' (Lee, 2015, p. 204). Adopting research done by Stadtler and Probst (2012) on brokers in public-private partnerships to the domain of CV, Lee (2011) identify three roles that intermediaries can take on: 1) connector, 2) facilitator and designer, and 3) learning catalyst. As connector, intermediaries help improve network links by matching firms with non-profit organizations. An example of this is the Dutch concept of the "social marketplace", where companies and non-profit can get together during a one-off event to meet and connect [2]. The second role, facilitator and designer, typifies intermediaries that not only make connections but also actively help in shaping these relationships. They do so by assisting in the development of volunteering opportunities, providing support, and identifying and resolving issues. Lastly, as learning

[2]For more information, visit https://www.beursvloer.com/english

catalyst, intermediaries concentrate on enhancing learning experiences among partners. This consists of giving advice, providing training and facilitating knowledge exchange. Depending on the needs of the company, it can choose to involve intermediaries at different steps in the development of CV programs.

3. **Recruitment & Retention**

> 'At the heart of any CV program are the volunteers themselves. They are the life of the program and are responsible for creating the positive impact on the non-profits they help.' (LBG Associates, 2012, p. 4)

Undeniably, corporate volunteers are what make a CV program. Without them, no services could be provided to non-profit organizations and their beneficiaries. Getting employees to participate in CV programs is essential, and as such companies need to think through their recruitment strategies. However, 'keeping them coming back is just as important as getting them there in the first place' (LBG Associates, 2012, p. 4), as sustained participation in CV programs maximizes its positive effects (Grant, 2012; Peterson, 2004; van Schie *et al.*, 2018). This section will examine what techniques employers can use to get their employees to volunteer, as well as what they can do to retain them.

(a) *Motivation*

As with any recruitment strategy, companies have to picture what kind of employee they wish to attract to their CV programs. Arguably, some employees are more likely to volunteer than others, and as such firms have to take into account individual motives when recruiting corporate volunteers (Clary & Snyder, 1999; Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac, 2015; Pajo & Lee, 2011; Peloza & Hassay, 2006; Peloza *et al.*, 2009). Research on the motivations to volunteer stems from traditional volunteering literature, with Clary *et al.* (1998)'s Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI) being the basis for many subsequent studies. Clary *et al.* posit that there are six motivations underlying volunteering (see Table 2.3). Identification with these motives has much to do with individual factors such as demographics—women are more likely to volunteer than men, higher levels of education are associated with more volunteering, and volunteering tends to increase with age (de Gilder *et al.*, 2005; Peterson, 2004; Rodell, 2013), as well as personality traits—extraversion, agreeableness, resiliency, empathy, and low social anxiety are linked to volunteerism (Wilson, 2012). Consolidating the motivations to volunteer leads to two different types of motives: 1) *self-oriented*, and 2) *other-oriented*. Gatignon-Turnau and Mignonac (2015) find that employees are less likely to participate in CV programs when they feel their employer is driven more by self-serving interests than those of the community. Indeed, most researchers conclude that corporate

volunteers are mainly motivated by supporting the community, desiring to do good or feeling satisfaction from helping those in need (Pajo & Lee, 2011; Peloza & Hassay, 2006; Peloza *et al.*, 2009; Sekar & Dyaram, 2017). However, Peloza *et al.* (2009) also find that employees participate in CV to obtain personal benefits such as career advancement, and knowledge and skill acquisition. Booth *et al.* (2009) substantiate these claims: the number of hours volunteered by employees was found to correlate most with the ability to acquire skills. Another motivation for corporate volunteers to engage in CV is to look good compared to their non-volunteering peers and as such impress their managers and teams (Peloza & Hassay, 2006). Lastly, Teague and Peterson (2011) suggest that the primary motivation to volunteer is the ability to establish and enhance social networks.

Function	Description	Type
Values	Express or act on important values like humanitarianism	Other-oriented
Understanding	Learn more about the world or exercise skills that are often unused	Self-oriented
Enhancement	Grow and develop psychologically	Self-oriented
Career	Gain career-related experience	Self-oriented
Social	Strengthen social relationships	Self-oriented
Protective	Reduce negative feelings, such as guilt, or address personal problems	Self-oriented

Table 2.3: Overview of the motivations to volunteer
Source: (Clary *et al.*, 1998)

All in all, there are a multitude of motivations for employee participation in CV, and there is no single determinant that triggers the decision. However, firms seem better off when recruiting corporate volunteers by focusing on community needs and the benefits that employees, not the employer, can gain. Recognizing what motivates employees to participate in CV, the next step for companies is to understand the motivations underlying repeated engagement in order to maximize the long-term benefits of CV. According to Clary and Snyder (1999), volunteers will repeat their services or not depending on whether their initial volunteering episodes matched their expectations of fulfilling certain

motives. Geroy *et al.* (2000) find the most important reasons for sustaining participation are meaningfulness of the activity, creation of social connections, and acquisition of knowledge and skills. Performing a task high in significance causes employees to feel they are able to make a contribution that benefits others, which stimulates them to continue doing so (Grant, 2012; Rodell, 2013). Employees also volunteer more hours when working together with others (Peterson, 2004), repeating participation in CV due to a sense of belonging (Haski-Leventhal & Cnaan, 2009). Lastly, corporate volunteers that see self-improvement from their volunteering activities are more likely to return as they feel competent and trusted to do important jobs like helping others (Clary *et al.*, 1998). However, Grant (2012) proposes that when employees are involved in multiple volunteering activities, the configuration of specific CV activities is no longer able to explain sustained participation. Instead, 'The strongest predictor of long-term engagement in volunteering is the internalization of the volunteering role into one's identity or self-concept' (Grant, 2012, p. 602). Taking part in CV various times leads employees to internalize their volunteering role; identifying as a corporate volunteer creates a self-perception of being pro-social and helpful, increasing the likelihood of participation in CV in the long-term (Penner, 2002).

(b) *Communication*

Getting employees to participate in CV depends on the extent to which employees are familiar with the activities, which has much to do with how they are communicated (Peloza *et al.*, 2009). Findings by Bhattacharya *et al.* (2008) suggest that, while almost all employees acknowledge the importance of CSR initiatives like CV, less than half are aware of their employer's actions and clearly understand its applications. A survey done by Deloitte (2017) encountered equally worrisome results, with 61% of employees stating their participation in CV would be greater simply if they were better informed on the impact they could make with it. Taking into account the importance of correctly communicating CV opportunities, LBG Associates (2012) discovered that some of the most effective methods to get employees engaged in CV are e-mails, word-of-mouth, online newsletters, and the company intranet. What these have in common is that employees do not have to actively search for information; instead, it is delivered to potential volunteers with little need for own effort. E-mails and word-of-mouth prove especially effective as they are personal, *i.e.* the message is directed specifically to the individual. It is worth to note here the differences between younger and older generations of employees; while social media is not a useful method to recruit the mass of employees, it is strikingly powerful to bring in

millennials (LBG Associates, 2012). However, according to Teague and Peterson (2011), communicating information on volunteerism only raises awareness and is not enough to get employees to participate. Nevertheless, internal marketing plays an important role in recruitment, and to appeal to corporate volunteers it should highlight the ability to obtain personal benefits such as practical work experience and novel knowledge (Peloza *et al.*, 2009).

(c) *Methods*

Even though communication is crucial in promoting awareness on volunteering opportunities among employees, companies could benefit from complementing internal marketing with other recruitment methods. In particular, Teague and Peterson (2011) uncovered that personally being asked brings in the most volunteers. This method proves even more effective when employees get approached by someone they know and value. However, companies should proceed with caution when involving (senior) management in recruiting volunteers. Even though they could be considered "known and valued" throughout the company, having management ask employees to volunteer is seen as an inappropriate request (Teague & Peterson, 2011). Rather than feeling inclined to volunteer, employees feel forced—leaving much of the "voluntariness" of CV to question (van Schie *et al.*, 2011). The role of senior management should concentrate on endorsing CV programs and providing support (LBG Associates, 2012). Regarding recruitment methods, firms are better off relying on corporate volunteer champions: a select group of passionate individuals that advertise CV activities and recruit potential volunteers (Teague & Peterson, 2011).

4. **Volunteering Activity**

After selecting the non-profit organization the company prefers to collaborate with and getting employees involved, the volunteering activity itself has to be designed. Some non-profit organizations offer pre-arranged volunteering assignments that firms can have employees choose from, while others will devise volunteering projects according to the wishes of each company.

(a) *Type of Activity*

Volunteering activities can take on a plethora of forms, ranging from single assignments with minimal commitment to extensive projects (Bartel, 2001). They can take place on the company's premises, or off-site at the recipients' location (Tschirhart, 2005). Volunteering can be done individually or in a team (Basil *et al.*, 2009). On the one hand, employees volunteering individually will do so by themselves at the non-profit

organization. This does not mean they will engage in an activity alone; rather, activities performed in teams are possible, but these teams will not include co-workers (Roza *et al.*, 2015). On the other hand, team-based volunteering activities are organized by gathering colleagues to volunteer together. Volunteering activities carried out in teams of corporate volunteers can deepen relationships between co-workers (Bartel, 2001), increase internal networks (Grant, 2012), and enhance employee self-image (Peloza *et al.*, 2009). Even volunteering assignments that include corporate volunteers from other companies can improve organizational identification and extend professional networks (Peloza & Hassay, 2006). The use of CV as social activity can also be cultivated by allowing employees to bring along friends and family (Roza *et al.*, 2015). In any case, interactions with others—including the ultimate beneficiaries of the activity—strengthen an employee's network, give access to potentially valuable connections, and may ultimately advance them in their careers (Grant, 2012).

Another way for employees to develop through CV is by carrying out skill-based volunteering (Bartel, 2001). Companies can design volunteering activities that apply employee's existing skills (Hess *et al.*, 2002), or arrange them such that they acquire new ones (Booth *et al.*, 2009). Exposure to situations outside the workplace enables employees to practice skills and knowledge they would not get the chance to use at work (Grant, 2012). As explained in Section 2.3, CV could be a low-cost way for firms to train employees by being 'an effective means to develop or enhance job-related skills including teamwork, leadership, communication and project management skills' (Pajo & Lee, 2011, p. 468). Indeed, companies use CV as vehicle for employee development by connecting employees to volunteering activities that use particular skill-sets (Boccalandro, 2009). All in all, the investment and development of employee capabilities enhance the desired outcomes of CV, including the ability to create value for the non-profit organization (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013). Nevertheless, Lee (2011) finds that most employees take on relatively unskilled tasks such as environmental work, general maintenance, administration, and social activities, also known as *hands-on* volunteering.

(b) *Duration of Activity*

Companies can choose to have employees volunteer during special events, whether this be a yearly volunteering day or several occasions throughout the year, or to allow them to work on volunteering activities continuously (Benjamin, 2001). Roza *et al.* (2015) adapt the volunteering typology of Macduff, Graff, and Millgard (2004) into two categories: firstly, temporary or *episodic* volunteers that provide services of short-term nature (usually one

day), and secondly, *interim* volunteers that support projects for longer periods of time (but typically no longer than six months). Most would argue that a longer-lasting impact on non-profit organizations and their ultimate beneficiaries is more desirable (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013), considering that sustained volunteerism is deemed necessary for (more) meaningful contributions and is found to increase CV related benefits (Booth *et al.*, 2009). According to Boccalandro (2009), CV programs are only effective in obtaining meaningful employee benefits when they involve larger numbers of employees for longer periods of time. Firms and their employees are able to make more impact as volunteer knowledge is retained and more integrative relationships can be formed (Roza *et al.*, 2017). Still, the shortage in (corporate) volunteers persists, and most volunteering activities are characterized as episodic (Roza *et al.*, 2015).

(c) *Training*

To improve the effectiveness of CV activities, Boccalandro (2009) states that corporate volunteers are in need of training: '[CV programs] that train employees on their volunteer charges are likely to increase the efficacy of their volunteering' (p. 31). Do Paço and Cláudia Nave (2013) have been one of the few to look at the effect of training on CV program outcomes. They find that a lack of training leads to a loss of satisfaction with CV activities, which could ultimately impact an employee's desire to stay. Supporting this claim is research from traditional volunteering literature, that shows that training facilitates commitment and retention of volunteers (Alfes *et al.*, 2017). In particular, the provision of training promotes role mastery; competence and confidence in performing activities makes volunteers more likely to carry on volunteering (Saksida, Alfes, & Shantz, 2017). However, organizations should pay attention to the extent to which they provide training: excessive training may take up valuable resources and not be worthwhile, especially considering the largely episodic character of volunteering activities (Alfes *et al.*, 2017). Applying this to the corporate domain, corporate volunteers typically already possess more professional skills than regular volunteers do (Benjamin, 2001) and as such could do with less training resources. Nonetheless, firms could do more to prepare their corporate volunteers for their volunteering activities. Some suggested solutions are better adapting training plans to employee needs, gathering data on training requirements, and developing training plans according to skills and knowledge required in CV activities (Do Paço & Cláudia Nave, 2013).

5. **Incentives & Support**

> 'While there is thus no limit to companies' level of support, leaving them with "flexibility in investing additional resources", a minimum level of involvement is required for the volunteering activities to be classified as CV.' (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017, p. 242)

As disclosed in Section 2.2, CV is defined by the support that corporate volunteers receive from their employer. Even more, the amount of support provided is likely to increase the level of involvement of employees (Booth *et al.*, 2009). For this reason, companies have to determine their degree of sponsorship when designing CV programs. Where some firms will take on a passive role with minimal support, others will actively assist their employees with substantial resources. Company support for volunteering efforts in the form of approving time off, modifying schedules, and providing resources is shown to increase the number of hours volunteered (Booth *et al.*, 2009). This section will deal with time, financial, logistics and managerial support, as well as incentives such as recognition and rewards, as ways for employers to fulfil their duty in running CV programs.

(a) *Time Support*

The most commonly used means for companies to support their corporate volunteers are time-oriented and include time off and flex-time (Booth *et al.*, 2009). Generally, firms have three options when giving time support: leave with pay, leave without pay, or the ability to adjust schedules (Basil *et al.*, 2011). Non-profit organizations state that decreased volunteering participation is mainly caused by time pressure, a factor particularly relevant for professionals with busy work weeks (Basil *et al.*, 2009). However, Peloza and Hassay (2006) find no effects of providing time off to corporate volunteers on participation and suggest that individual managers should decide appropriate protocols for their own departments. Still, a survey by Deloitte (2017) reveals that 62% of employees is unable to set aside time for volunteering, causing 69% to feel they are not volunteering as much as they aspire to.

(b) *Financial and Logistics Support*

Next to time support, financial and logistics support such as donations, reimbursements, and transportation are given most often by companies that provide support (Booth *et al.*, 2009). Employees are more likely to participate when their employer arranges the logistics surrounding volunteering activities, relating to the time constraints noted earlier. Costs relating to volunteering activities can also pose a barrier for employees to participate and as such employers typically cover for CV expenses (Rodell *et al.*, 2016). They

can reimburse costs like entry tickets, transport but also provide in-kind donations such as materials and the use of premises (Gatignon-Turnau & Mignonac, 2015). For this reason, companies that establish CV programs typically grant a budget to cover necessary expenses (Brown & Ashcraft, 2005). The majority of CV program funds are allocated to program administration, suggesting that logistical issues receive priority (Benjamin, 2001).

(c) *Managerial Support*

Less to do with tangible resources and more to do with organizational culture is managerial support. Managerial support entails, as Grant (2012) elaborates, 'a climate of encouragement, senior management role modelling, and facilitative procedures' (p. 604), giving employees the feeling that their participation in CV is valued. Peloza and Hassay (2006) found that corporate volunteers are more likely to get involved in volunteering activities when their senior managers showed positive attitudes towards CV and participated themselves. Especially senior management plays a large role in giving CV foothold in the company, as employees look up for signals on the importance of such programs. While middle management is also called upon, direct managers typically face more difficulties in promoting volunteering as they are evaluated on the business results they deliver (Lee, 2011). However, excessive management involvement can backlash: volunteering in its essence is an altruistic activity and employees that feel pressured will be reluctant to participate (van Schie *et al.*, 2018).

(d) *Recognition & Rewards*

In order to prevent employees from feeling controlled in their volunteering pursuits, incentivizing corporate volunteers in the form of tangible (rewards) and intangible (recognition) awards allows a company to show its commitment to corporate volunteers and deliver the message that its support is genuine (Boccalandro, 2009). According to Peterson (2004), recognition is one of the most effective methods to increase employee involvement in CV. Recognition is a symbolic reward and calls for making a corporate volunteer's efforts widely known, usually done through awards, mentions in newsletters, or specific events (Grant, 2012). It raises internal awareness of CV programs, as well as raises employee morale and satisfaction (LBG Associates, 2012). Following the principle of reciprocity, (corporate) volunteers are more likely to participate and provide additional volunteering hours when they feel appreciated by their employer and the organization they volunteer at (Booth *et al.*, 2009).

6. **Performance Evaluation**

Lastly, companies can choose whether and how to evaluate their CV program's effectiveness in obtaining CV goals. Corporations are increasingly pressured to disclose information on its social activities—a phenomenon referred to as 'the social reporting movement' (Hess *et al.*, 2002, p. 115). If companies decide to measure the outcomes of its program, it has to select what it will measure, how it will do so, and whom to share this information with. The components of outcome measurement that are considered are as such the chosen degree of measurement, setting of goals, the type of measures employed, and the extent to which a company reports its outcomes.

(a) *Degree of Measurement*

According to CECP (2018), a successful CV program is one that is measurable. Yet, in practice few companies go as far as measuring and evaluating what they are doing with their CV activities (Lee, 2011). Allen *et al.* (2011) explain this lack of investment in performance evaluation with a variety of possible answers, including issues such as lack of (willingness to invest) resources, complexity associated with CV processes, and absence of established data collection tools. While installing a measurement process satisfies the call for closer examination of CV's ability to deliver results, it can also help to improve its management and place in the organization. However, setting in place formal evaluation mechanisms could also expose CV programs to scrutiny as to whether it creates business value and budget cuts in times of economic downturn (Points of Light Foundation, 2005). Nonetheless, considering the abundance of benefits related to CV, the bulk of CV literature and practitioners affirms the need for measurement (Boccalandro, 2009).

(b) *Goal-setting*

Once a company has decided it will measure its CV program, the next step is determining *what* it will measure. According to Allen *et al.* (2011), 'Assessment starts with a clear sense of what you want to achieve. Goals come before measures. Measures come before data collection techniques' (p. 49). As asserted in Section 2.4.1, companies should take a strategic approach when establishing CV programs. The same rationale goes for setting up measurement mechanisms: companies have to identify the key goals they want to achieve and adopt the process accordingly (Points of Light Foundation, 2005). Goal-setting will maximize the learning that firms can realize from their measurement practices, as it allows them to trail progress towards goals and make adjustments as necessary (Boccalandro, 2009).

(c) *Type of Measures*

The next step in establishing evaluation procedures is determining how the chosen indicators will be measured. Most companies that measure program results are concerned with computing outputs, such as the number of employees participating and hours volunteered, or employee satisfaction (Lee, 2011; Points of Light Foundation, 2005). Still, little congruence exists in the way that companies calculate and report their program's performance; few readily available measurement tools exist and there is a need for the development of such instruments (Points of Light Foundation, 2005). In order to overcome this issue, Allen *et al.* (2011) suggest making use of metrics adopted by NPOs in order to measure the impact of CV programs. In a similar fashion, Boccalandro (2009) recommend firms to make use of established instruments; companies usually already have measures in place for business goals like employee engagement. Nonetheless, the measure that remains in the biggest need of development is the measurement of societal impact (Boccalandro, 2009). Sharing how many employees were engaged in CV is not as impressive as being able to show the benefits that the community gained as a result of those corporate volunteers (Brown & Ashcraft, 2005). While the call for demonstrating firm involvement actually benefits the community continues, it has been moderated by the focus on business goals (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017). More work needs to be done to understand the impact of CV and how it can be measured (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017; LBG Associates, 2012).

(d) *Reporting*

A last choice regarding outcome measurement of CV programs is what to do with its results. The majority of companies does not have formal reporting processes in place, rather communicating CV program results face-to-face during meetings (Brown & Ashcraft, 2005). Interestingly, firms are keener to report their externally than internally. In a study by Benjamin (2001), almost half of all participants said to send out press releases about its CV program and one-third to communicate about its activities during events. Companies that do formally report on their CV programs typically do so by publicizing participation rates, volunteering hours, and the dollar value of these hours (LBG Associates, 2012). Nevertheless, what constitutes a successful CV program continues to be a debated question among CV practitioners and scholars.

The design elements of CV programs are summarized as follows:

Figure 2.6: Overview of the design elements of corporate volunteering programs
Source: This study

2.5 Gap in the Literature

All in all, CV literature has done much to develop a business case for companies entering the volunteering domain, making it a well-established apparatus in the field of community involvement activities (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017). Scholars have uncovered what defines CV (Section 2.2), how CV provides benefits or potentially costs to those involved (Section 2.3), what goals firms are able to achieve through its use (Section 2.4.1), and how it can design CV programs in a myriad of ways (Section 2.4.2). With hundreds of publications to date, the question is no longer “why” but “how” (Roza *et al.*, 2015). Indeed, numerous scholars have addressed the need to think of CV initiatives more strategically (Basil *et al.*, 2009; Booth *et al.*, 2009; Peloza & Hassay, 2006; Porter & Kramer, 2002), stemming from the concern that CV may not be generating the vast impact it potentially has (Booth *et al.*, 2009; Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013). As explained by Hess *et al.* (2002): ‘Obvious budgetary constraints dictate the necessity to invest only in programs that are most beneficial to the community and the firm’ (p. 119). Still, few firms approach social activities in the same way as business pursuits and overlook the importance of formulating an appropriate strategy (Allen *et al.*, 2011). In order to do so, however, they must first understand that there is no straight road to success but rather an indirect effect of CSR activities like CV on firm performance (Carroll & Shabana, 2010). In particular, the achievement of desired results has been found to be contingent upon the design of CSR (Orlitzky *et al.*, 2003) and is thought to work in a similar fashion for particular initiatives such as CV (Caligiuri *et al.*,

2013). After all, CV programs come in all kinds of forms and 'the choice of volunteer projects may vary depending on whether the goal is to maximize employee skill development, company visibility in the community, or value to a nonprofit organization' (Meijs *et al.*, 2009, p. 26).

Despite the call for strategic thinking on how CV programs should be organized, little has been done to understand what drives its outcomes. As commented on by Rodell *et al.* (2016): 'Although the studies discussed above provide valuable descriptive information about the nature and structure of employee volunteering programs, only a handful of them examined the impact on workplace outcomes' (p. 73). For one, Grant (2012) has investigated how the design of volunteering activities and organizational support influences the extent to which employees take part in CV projects, arguing that the success of CV programs relies on sustained employee participation. Van Schie *et al.* (2018) has extended this work by arguing that repeated participation alone cannot explain the positive effects of CV. Instead, employee motivation is key, which is related to CV program characteristics such as the meaningfulness of projects and the self-selection of causes. Next, Booth *et al.* (2009) has suggested that the amount of support provided by firms is associated with the number of hours volunteered by its employees, while Peterson (2004) has found that strategies involving team projects, matching incentives, performance evaluation and recognition are effective in increasing employee participation. Lastly, Meijs *et al.* (2009) has shown that program choices relating to the commitment to the program, diversity of CV activities, and encouragement of participation impact employees' willingness and ability to volunteer. However, as vital as employee participation in CV programs may be, it is only one aspect of CV programs and falls short of explaining how resulting outcomes are obtained. Instead, Gatignon-Turnau and Mignonac (2015) have researched how employer support for CV can lead to a higher end goal: greater organizational commitment. Still, as shown in Section 2.4.1, a plethora of other goals exist, and there is a need to study other relevant CV design factors to explain successful CV programs (van Schie *et al.*, 2018). Perhaps the most thorough account of CV program design on outcomes has been created by Roza *et al.* (2017), which have been able to show how volunteering persistence, type of involvement, and type of assignment impact individual and organizational outcomes. However, with their focus on the perspective of the non-profit, the company view still remains largely unexplained. Even though some research on this subject has been done through private initiatives (see for example Boccalandro (2009) and Points of Light Foundation (2005)), scholarly literature has yet to address the gap in knowledge on the relationship between CV program design and outcomes.

Peterson (2004) comes with a clear message: there is a need for linking CV program elements to outcomes. According to Roza *et al.* (2017), 'No straightforward line can be drawn between project objectives, program characteristics, and outcomes' (p. 17). This thought is

supported by Breitsohl and Ehrig (2017) and Lee (2011), which acknowledge the lack of theory on how different features of CV serve social and business goals. Yet, firms wanting to be strategic about their CSR initiatives should adopt an input-output approach; understanding how program inputs lead to outputs will help them design effective programs that deliver the most value (Bhattacharya *et al.*, 2008). As explained by van Schie *et al.* (2011): 'CV programmes should be designed in goal-oriented ways with an awareness of their possible effects' (p. 127). Accordingly, this study attempts to close the gap by examining how CV program inputs (CV program design) produce CV program outputs (CV program goals). The framework underpinning this research is visualized in Figure 2.7. Chapter 3 will provide a detailed description of how this research tries to shed light on the black box of designing effective CV programs.

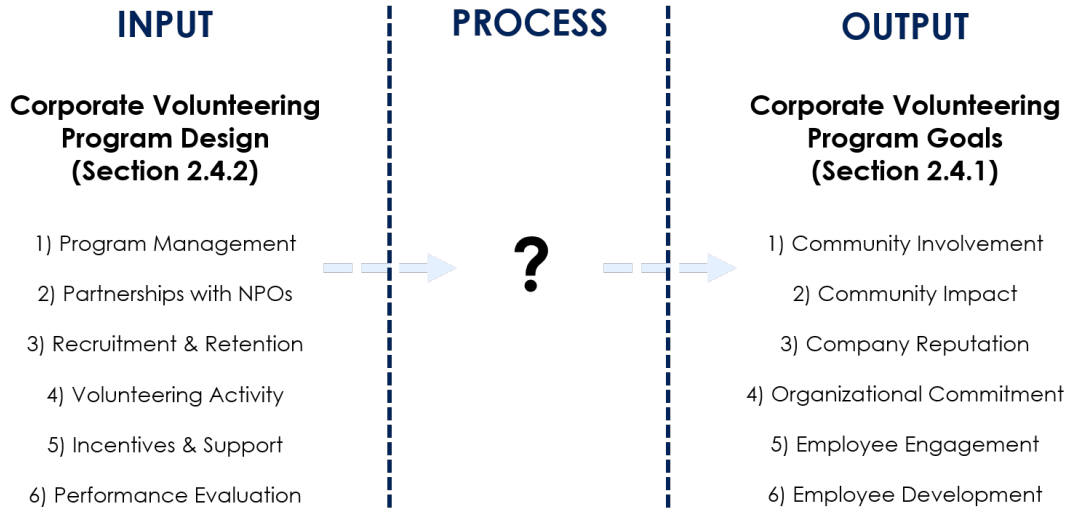


Figure 2.7: Conceptual framework
Source: This study

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Objective

The key to this research is generating new theory in the field of corporate volunteering management, specifically taking a first step in uncovering how firms can effectively design CV programs. As seen in Section 2.4.1, companies can aim for a number of goals and as such the notion of "effective" depends on a company's individual motives behind using the CV program (Meijs *et al.*, 2009). Taking into account that each company will have its own aspirations and priorities, this study will seek to uncover the specific design elements that lead to the achievement of certain CV program goals. This way, companies can adapt the design of their CV program such that they achieve their desired results. As this study attempts to explain relationships between variables, it can be seen as explanatory (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Explanatory studies are those that are 'examining the reasons for, or associations between, what exists' (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 27), in this case the relationship between CV program design and goals. By building upon existing knowledge and taking the same perspective as the majority of CV literature (*i.e.*, the company) (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017), this study hopes to advance the field of CV by exposing currently unidentified links and providing a foundation for further research. This will give practitioners the ability to better align what they wish to achieve from CV with its actual outcomes.

3.2 Research Questions

With the research objective in mind, the following research question (RQ) has been defined:

RQ How can companies design effective corporate volunteering programs?

Considering the complexity of this question, the main question has been broken down into several sub-questions (SQ):

SQ1 What are the goals of corporate volunteering programs?

SQ2 What are the design elements of corporate volunteering programs?

SQ3 What is the relationship between the goals and design elements of corporate volunteering programs?

The first two sub-questions will be answered both by reviewing previously published literature as done in Chapter 2, as well as by verifying and adding to the literature through primary data collection. As no prior theory exists on the third sub-question, it will be retrieved entirely through primary data collection and analysis. A comprehensive view of the chosen design will be discussed in the following section.

3.3 Research Design

3.3.1 Research Philosophy

Before describing the exact ways in which this study was conducted, it is imperative to express the underlying assumptions that have steered subsequent design choices. These assumptions are rooted in the particular research philosophy advocated and concern the researcher's stance towards the nature of reality (ontology) and the nature of knowledge (epistemology) (Burrell & Morgan, 2014). The first set of assumptions, ontology, deals with the question what reality is and ranges from realism to idealism. At one extreme, realism assumes that there is one external reality that exists independent of people's beliefs and is therefore objective, while the other extreme, idealism, argues that reality is subjective and shaped by our ideas and thoughts (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). This study takes on the position of a variant of idealism, relativism, that emphasizes the role of social interactions in shaping reality. It is commonly adopted in social science and believes that reality is not singular but instead context-specific and dependent on individual actors (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

The second ideological issue, epistemology, considers how this reality can be studied and can lead to the creation of knowledge. Epistemology knows two contrasting views: positivism and interpretivism. On the one hand, positivism resembles the natural sciences as it assumes the social world is likewise governed by laws and as such research can be done objectively, free of values, and independent from the researcher (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). On the other hand,

interpretivism (also known as construcivism) supposes that the researcher and the participant are interrelated. It believes that research in the social sciences cannot be carried out without the influence of perspective and values, and as such the methods used by natural sciences are not appropriate (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The latter approach will be adopted in this study, as it is thought that the unique and complex nature of companies and their CV initiatives calls for the immersion in the world of the research subject rather than the generalization to law-like phenomena (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). As explained by Burrell and Morgan (2014), for anti-positivists such as interpretivists, 'The social world is essentially relativistic and can only be understood from the point of view of the individuals who are directly involved in the activities which are to be studied' (p. 5).

3.3.2 Research Approach

Taking into consideration the belief systems that are at the foundation of this study, the following section clarifies *how* it will go about retrieving knowledge. The research approach relates to how theories are developed and data are collected, and can be subdivided into deduction and induction. In the case a deductive approach is taken, theory and hypotheses are developed and subsequently tested through data analysis. Deduction is used for verifying theories and coming up with 'conclusive proof' (Blumberg, Cooper, & Schindler, 2014, p. 433). Alternatively, the inductive approach collects data and develops theory in response to the corresponding results. As such, induction works in opposition to deduction: rather than verifying prior conclusions using facts, it uses facts to draw conclusions and results into theory (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). While there is extant knowledge on different CV program goals and design elements, allowing for a deductive approach in answering SQ1 and SQ2, much remains unknown about their relationship, requiring an inductive approach for SQ3. All in all, a mixed approach seems appropriate to paint the whole picture (Blumberg *et al.*, 2014).

Other than choosing between deduction and induction, research design calls for a pick between two types of data collection and analysis approaches: quantitative or qualitative. Whereas quantitative research is described as research that produces and/or makes use of numerical data, qualitative research refers to research that generates and/or applies non-numerical data such a words and images (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). According to Blumberg *et al.* (2014), 'quantitative research attempts precise measurement of something' (p. 146), while 'qualitative research is designed to tell the researcher how (process) and why (meaning) things happen as they do' (p. 144). With the goal of discovering *how* CV program design leads to CV program goals, this research seems to favour the qualitative method. This idea is supported

by Ritchie and Lewis (2003), who advocate the use of qualitative methods for phenomena that are, amongst others, 1) not well understood, 2) deeply rooted, and 3) complex. While CV itself may be well-studied and relatively easy to comprehend, the relationships between different components of CV—design and goals—are not and require closer examination. As this knowledge is "rooted" in the minds of those behind the organization of CV programs, it may take time to be retrieved and requires close contact with those studied in order for theory to emerge. Lastly, it could be said that the phenomenon of CV is complex, with a vast amount of CV program design and goals in existence and no clear best-case scenario. As such, before being able to quantify the extent to which certain design elements increase or decrease specific CV program goals, it is necessary to identify whether these linkages exist in the first place through obtaining qualitative evidence. As said by Ritchie and Lewis (2003), the use of qualitative research allows for 'respecting the uniqueness of each case as well as conducting cross-case analysis' (p. 4). This means that the choice for qualitative research in this study not only gives the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of different CV program design and goals (SQ1 and SQ2) but also the ability to sketch a more comprehensive picture on if and how they relate (SQ3).

3.3.3 Research Strategy

Building upon the notion that theory formulation is desired, there are several research strategies that can be employed to obtain answers to the questions outlined in Section 3.2. This study relies upon two research strategies: case study and grounded theory. Both take on a mixed deductive-inductive research approach and are believed to be suitable for studies aiming to generate new theory (Blumberg *et al.*, 2014).

Firstly, a case study is the investigation of a phenomenon within its context; this strategy is appropriate for research that aims to gather a rich understanding of a particular issue, as is the case for the subject of CV in this study (Blumberg *et al.*, 2014). Within case study, Yazan (2015) identifies three main perspectives, namely those of Merriam (1998), Stake (1995), and Yin (2009). On the spectrum of epistemological stances, Yin leans towards positivism, while Stake and Merriam adopt constructivism: they differ in their view on whether case studies are able to lead to established facts (Yin, 2009), or rather multi-perspective interpretations (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). In addition to this, their perspectives vary on the definition of a case, the design of a case study, and the subsequent collection and analysis of data. According to Yin (2009), a case study is characterized by the blurry boundaries between the phenomenon (volunteering) and its context (company). Yin promotes the use of case studies for their ability to address "how" and "why" questions and adopts a strict research process that is based on previously

reviewed literature and subject to minor changes in order to achieve optimal results. Stake (1995) agrees with Yin's belief that cases are difficult to define and are as such more beneficial for studying and evaluating complex programs rather than looking at more sporadic events and processes. However, their views differ in that Stake (1995) prefers a more flexible approach in establishing and carrying out the research design. Merriam (1998) opposes Yin and Stake with regards to the definition of a case: Merriam believes that it is not difficult to define and instead advocates that it is characterized by the ability to draw boundaries between the issue and its context. Merriam's approach to case study design can be seen as a mix, recommending flexibility but only to a certain degree. In contrast to Yin's rigor and use of traditional methods in achieving quality data, Stake (1995) to some extent and Merriam (1998) more extensively describe the use of alternative tools to enhance reliability and validity. Considering the nature of and assumptions underlying this research, the perspectives of Merriam (1998) and Stake (1995) are considered most in line with this study. It follows Stake's notion that the subject of CV is not clearly delimited, as it is believed that the boundaries of voluntariness are blurred by putting charity work in a corporate context. Both authors encourage a flexible approach to allow theory to naturally emerge and believe qualitative research benefits from validation criteria different from those used in natural sciences. However, considering that 'compared to Stake, Merriam presents a much more comprehensive approach to qualitative understanding of data validation' (Yazan, 2015, p. 147), it prefers Merriam's data analysis and validation techniques. Looking at the different types of case studies, a multiple, holistic case structure is chosen. Considering there is only one unit of analysis, *i.e.* the company, the case study can be regarded as holistic (Yin, 2009). Then, the use of multiple cases allows for comparison and consequently to a better ability in generalizing findings which is explained by Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p. 52) as follows: 'They are used where no single perspective can provide a full account or explanation of the research issue, and where understand needs to be holistic, comprehensive and contextualised.'

Secondly, grounded theory was chosen as it is concerned with the same aim as this research: developing theory. While grounded theory starts from an inductive approach with the generation of theory from data without using an existing framework, it refers back to data at later stages in order to test the constructed theory and as such can be seen as a mix between induction and deduction (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Grounded theory introduces, as discussed by Kenny and Fourie (2015), the method of constant comparison: by continuously comparing findings from data analysis with existing findings, 'it enables the analyst to proficiently engender a theory that is credible, consistent, and closely integrated with the data' (p. 1271). In addition to this, it follows the concept of theoretical saturation, continuing the collection of data until no new observations are found (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory proves particularly

useful for 'the generation of analytical categories and their dimensions, and the identification of relationships between them' (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 201). Given that this study revolves around CV program goals, CV program design, and their relationship to each other, grounded theory as research strategy is believed to be a good fit. Similar to case studies, several perspectives on grounded theory exist: classic, Straussian, and constructivist (Kenny & Fourie, 2015). Classic grounded theory emphasizes the natural emergence of theory from data to construct an as objective as possible image, calling for careful coding and refraining from literature until after data analysis to ensure an open mind (Glaser & Holton, 2004). Conversely, the Straussian approach criticizes this lack in using literature, arguing that existing knowledge should be reviewed *prior* to data analysis in order to reveal gaps, produce research questions, and aid sample selection (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Furthermore, their approaches differ in that classic grounded theory trusts the emergence of theory from adopting structured yet flexible coding, while Straussian encourages the use of a more rigid coding process in order to be thorough and effective in creating theory (Kenny & Fourie, 2015). The third approach, constructivist, opposes their both more or less structured techniques and states that complete flexibility in coding is necessary to obtain real emergence of theory (Charmaz, 2006). Furthermore, Charmaz (2006) describes the end result of grounded theory as the researcher's narration of the phenomena studied instead of its conceptualization. Comparing the three main forms of grounded theory, this study mixes elements of the classic and Straussian ways. While it favours the Straussian belief that theories represent interpretations of reality over the classical thought that the researcher uncovers an objective reality, it prefers a structured yet flexible adaptation of coding techniques due to unfamiliarity with the method.

3.3.4 Research Methods

With the research strategy set, the next element of research design to consider are the research methods used. Where the research approach and strategy outline *how* this study goes about studying the research problem in its context, the research methods spell out *what* specific means it uses in order to do so. Within qualitative research, several research methods exist, and these may be used in isolation (mono-method) or combined (multi-method). Following the thought that '[A good qualitative research study design] is also one which is realistic, conceived with due regard both for practical constraints of time and money and for the reality of the research context and setting.' (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 47), this study has opted for the use of a single data collection tool. The following section discusses in what context the study took place, together with the specific data collection method chosen and the data analysis process followed.

Population & Sample

As this study analyses CV programs from an organizational perspective, individuals in managerial positions were chosen to be studied as they were deemed to have the most knowledge on coordinating and organizing CV programs. Respondents were gathered from three different types of organizations: 1) companies, 2) non-profit organizations, and 3) intermediaries. It was thought to be important to gather information not only from companies but also from other parties involved in the development of CV programs, as they could contribute different perspectives. The focus here, however, is still on individuals in managing positions; although volunteers themselves could have been able share additional insights on what works well in CV programs, the limited amount of resources led to targeting CV program coordinators. For this same reason, subjects were chosen based on purposive sampling. Information-rich cases, *i.e.* organizations with several years of experience in organizing CV, were identified through desk research and selected through maximum-variation sampling. In particular, they were chosen for their diversity in CV program design and goals. Comparing highly diverging cases allows the challenging of emerging patterns, and thus to better isolate the design elements that lead to specific CV outcomes (Blumberg *et al.*, 2014). In addition, it is appropriate for research based on grounded theory, as it allows for the selection of additional insightful cases on the basis of earlier sampling—ultimately leading to saturation (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

This research took place in the context of the Netherlands due to the close proximity of participants and the falling behind of European literature compared to North-American on the topic of CV. Countries such as the United States and Canada have dominated the field of CV by publishing almost six times more than Western Europe; only 4% of CV research has taken place in the Netherlands (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017). While this low number may be explained by the fact that companies typically had little to do with community involvement due to the large role of the government (Roza *et al.*, 2017), the decline of the welfare state has increasingly put pressure on firms to increase their societal engagement (de Gilder *et al.*, 2005). Taking into account that only one-fourth of Dutch firms currently pursue CV initiatives, these numbers are expected to rise in the coming years and as such additional research seems appropriate (Hoolwerf & Schuyt, 2017). Still, this study has chosen to target mostly large, multinational companies in order to allow for greater comparison across countries (Arenas & Ayuso, 2016).

Data Collection

The qualitative data collection method deemed most appropriate for this study was in-depth interviewing. This study aims to understand how companies can enhance their CV programs

in order to obtain improved results, seeking for the relationship between inputs and outputs; according to Ritchie and Lewis (2003), 'Understanding motivations and decisions, or exploring impacts and outcomes, generally requires the detailed personal focus that in-depth interviews allow' (p. 58). The use of interviewing for studies that aim to uncover causal relationships is supported by Rubin and Rubin (2012), who believe that they are particularly suitable for making sense of 'how and why things change' (p. 3). In particular, individual rather than group interviews were chosen as they enabled more thorough investigation of individual cases and were more feasible to organize due to lack of sufficient time by participants (Blumberg *et al.*, 2014). A semi-structured style was embraced as it allowed focus in obtaining necessary answers but at the same time flexibility in uncovering emerging theory. Additionally, 'In an explanatory study, semi-structured interviews may be used in order to understand the relationships between variables' (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p. 322). The time horizon in which this study was carried out was, mainly due to time constraints, that of one point in time or cross-sectional. However, following Saunders *et al.* (2009), 'Cross-sectional studies [...] explain how factors are related in different organizations' (p. 155) and as such the choice also fits the problem under study.

In order to gain access to relevant knowledge, 27 organizations were contacted to ask for the possibility to conduct an interview with the individual responsible for managing CV programs. For the purpose of establishing credibility and increasing the odds of acceptance, an introductory letter was sent out to participants via e-mail (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). This e-mail explained the individual in question the purpose of the research, how their participation could advance the research, and what they would be able to gain in return (see Appendix B). A total of 20 organizations accepted and took part in the research over the course of four weeks, leading to a 75% success rate in recruiting participants. Qualitative studies tend to rely on smaller sample sizes, as was the case in this research, and as such they tend to look at the achievement of saturation rather than the number of participants to determine methodological soundness (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This achievement was perceived after approximately 15 interviews. The 20 participants were divided as following: 14 companies, three non-profit organizations, and three intermediaries. Two interviews were conducted in pairs, leading to a total of 22 interviewees. Fifteen were conducted face-to-face at a preferred location for the interviewee, and five by phone. On average, interviews lasted 50 minutes—excluding introduction and conversation-making. Companies had on average 15 years of experience with CV programs, while individuals were on average six years in function; the shortest performing its role for six months and the longest for 22 years. Most individuals held the position of project manager, while the secondly most common functions were director or chairman. Others included senior advisor/consultant, relation manager, and ambassador. Interestingly, almost all participants were female: 19 as opposed to

three males. The majority of companies was active in the financial services industry, following a common trend in CV literature where the largest number of publications focuses on the financial and professional services sectors (Dreesbach-Bundy & Scheck, 2017).

Where possible, interviews were carried out face-to-face in order to establish greater rapport and as such improve the quality of the interview (Blumberg *et al.*, 2014). For research participants unable or unwilling to do so, phone interviews were scheduled as these still allowed data to be gathered—albeit potentially less far-reaching. In order to ensure consistency across interviews, an interview guide was used and adapted where necessary (see Appendix C). Each interview started off with an introduction, presenting the background of the research and terms and conditions such as confidentiality (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Participants were then asked to sign a consent form, or in case of phone interviews to verbally agree with their interview being recorded (see Appendix D). All participants agreed to the terms and conditions of this research, at the same time allowing for the recording of their interview using recording equipment. Audio recordings were supplemented with the taking of notes. The interview itself consisted of four types of questions: introductory, background, main, and finishing. Background questions were considered important for the establishment of rapport with the research participant, as well as for developing a better understanding of the perspective of the interviewee. Introductory questions were used to deepen knowledge on the CV program in place as online background research typically provided little details, and to verify and amend earlier findings on the range of CV program design and goals (SQ1 and SQ2). Then, the main questions focused on how participants would like to change the design of CV programs to better achieve goals, exploring the relationships between design and goals (SQ3). In each of these sections, follow-up questions and probes were used to go into detail into statements made by participants (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). To provide closure, participants were giving the opportunity to ask questions of their own or add other information at the end of the interview (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003), after which the interview concluded with information on the next steps of the research.

Data Analysis

After interviews were conducted, its audio recordings were transcribed verbatim [1]. The provision of a full account of the participant's recording was considered necessary for ensuring no relevant information was overlooked. As commented on by Charmaz (2006), 'Coding full interview transcriptions gives you ideas and understandings that you otherwise miss' (p. 70). Unfortunately, one session (C1) failed to record properly and hence its transcription consists

[1] Transcripts are available upon request at 485454sr@student.eur.nl

of an account of notes taken during the interview. In order to still include its perspective in this study's analysis, the notes were paraphrased in Chapter 4 and marked to disclose quotes were not the participant's precise wordings.

The written transcripts were coded to prepare for further analysis, using qualitative data analysis software (ATLAS.ti 8) to ease the process of coding and structuring data (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). In line with Section 3.3.2 and 3.3.3, a mixed approach was taken with regards to analyzing the data. Firstly, coding was done inductively, allowing insights to emerge from the data rather than using accepted categories (Glaser & Holton, 2004). Through the use of open coding, 'new evidence continues to be gathered, compared, analysed, and categorized, categories become dense and complex and their inter-relationships begin to become apparent' (Kenny & Fourie, 2015, p. 1273). At the same time, a preliminary coding scheme was created in order to condense codes into broader categories. As explained by Ritchie and Lewis (2003), 'This is achieved by identifying links between categories, grouping them thematically and then sorting them according to different levels of generality so that the index has a hierarchy of main and subthemes' (p. 222). Then, these initial codes were compared to existing literature and adapted in order to achieve congruence in the naming of themes (Kenny & Fourie, 2015; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Following the method of constant comparison, the codes and the coding scheme were adapted iteratively until theory started to emerge. Eventually, the following main themes were discovered: 1) goals, consisting of community-serving, company-serving, and employee-serving goals, and 2) design elements, relating to program management, partnerships with NPOs, the volunteering activity, and supporting activities. Next, an explanatory account of the relationship between these two categories was sought for by looking for patterns in the data (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Associations were searched for in individual cases, after which they were verified by establishing wider distribution across cases. This process was aided by the creation of networks for each CV program goal and their linking CV design elements (for an example, see Appendix F).

As noted when speaking of research context, this study took place in the Netherlands. Interviews were conducted in Dutch, as it was thought that participants would be better able to fully express their understanding of the phenomenon under study in their mother tongue as opposed to other languages. Correspondingly, data analysis was also performed in Dutch in order to ensure as much consistency as possible and avoid the loss of meaning in translation. Relevant codes and quotations were translated only at the end of the analysis (Squires, 2009). To ensure anonymity, all participants were given pseudonyms and recognizable names were replaced with generic terms (*i.e.*, university instead of Erasmus University).

Data Quality

A large concern in any type of research but particularly in qualitative studies is ensuring the quality of its investigation and the credibility of subsequent findings. The two aspects of quality control that are generally discerned are that of validity and reliability. Blumberg *et al.* (2014) define validity as 'the extent to which a test measures what we actually wish to measure' (p. 257), while it describes reliability as 'the accuracy and precision of a measurement procedure' (p. 257). On the one hand, validity is commonly divided into internal validity, whether the research instrument measures what it is supposed to measure, and external validity, whether what is measured is applicable to other settings or groups of the population (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). To ensure internal validity, this study has sought for repeated patterns in the data by constantly reviewing and comparing across cases (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), as well as for the existence of exceptions that could explain why these patterns may not always be found (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The enhancement of external validity was attempted through maximum variation sampling; by ensuring a large amount of diversity in CV programs, the results are more likely to be applicable to a wider range of cases (Merriam, 1998). At the same time, the triangulation of results by comparing data generated from different respondents has aided in confirming the findings of this study (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). On the other hand, reliability can be improved by minimizing interviewer and participant error. To mitigate any negative effects the interviewer may have on the quality of gathered data, this study has relied on an interview guide to ensure consistency in questioning as well as on audio equipment to guarantee accuracy in recording answers (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). Error on the part of the study's participants was hoped to be reduced in two ways. For one, interviewee's willingness to participate was targeted not only by explaining how their participation could be valuable to the research but also by emphasizing what they could gain in return. Second, the ability of respondents to give correct and complete answers was addressed by screening participants in advance. This was done by identifying suitable individuals through desk research, or, when unable to be determined in this way, by asking the organization itself for the relevant person. By targeting only members of the organization knowledgeable about CV programs, *i.e.* those in charge, this research has ascertained interviewees were able to provide information on the phenomenon under study (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

Chapter 4

Results

Results that were supported by three or more independent sources are bold and highlighted in **dark blue**, whereas suggestions that were made by less than three participants are italic and marked with *light blue*. Quotations make reference to the participant interviewed and are typed by the organization the participant was part of: C for company, IM for intermediaries, and NPO for non-profit organizations. A detailed overview of the interviewing sequence and corresponding codes can be found in Appendix E.

4.1 Revisiting CV Programs: Literature versus Practice

4.1.1 CV Program Goals

Throughout Chapter 2 and in particular Section 2.3, CV was hypothesized as being a win-win-win situation: everyone involved is supposed to benefit from its implementation. For the most part, the results of this study confirm this view, with 11 out of 20 interviewees (eight of them being companies) emphasizing the importance of providing benefits to more than one party when discussing the goals of their CV program.

> 'We feel that with our assignments, we can create a win-win-win situation. Actually threefold, one the one hand you can say: we are a company with a role in society, so having a CV program is one way to fulfil that. Next to that, we work with partner organizations that are active in the field of volunteering or that give support to local projects in developing countries, so you want to support those. And third, we want to develop our employees and make sure they learn something outside the walls of our office.' (C10)

Nonetheless, companies vary in the type of goal they give priority to; when speaking of CV program goals, participants framed their goals in terms of the party that would receive the benefit. In line with Section 2.4.1, three perspectives were found to be at the root of CV program goals: 1) the community, 2) the company, and 3) the employee.

1. **Community**

   In Section 2.4.1, it was posited that at the foundation of every CV program should be the goal to give back to the community; while CV as form of charitable giving can benefit others, its primary aim should be aiding the community. Fortunately, this belief was verified, with all companies but one (13) aspiring to support the community in one way or another. Even so, there were several gradations in how far companies aspired to go in providing assistance to non-profit organizations and the community. In like manner to Austin (2010), three stages were identified for the evolving commitment of companies to non-profit organizations and their beneficiaries, extending the two steps as found in Section 2.4.1: 1) community involvement, 2) support to NPOs, and 3) community impact.

   > 'We really want to help with our knowledge and skills, and we see that as more valuable than simply giving money. We just think this has a lot more effect.' (C6)

   > 'In the end, you want to have an impact. You want to be able to say, in one way or another, that you contributed to something.' (C12)

   In the first stage, companies simply respond to societal demands and use CV as a form of **community involvement**. Six companies were found to commit to the community with only this goal in mind.

   > 'Everything we do is part of involvement. Community involvement.' (C12)

   > 'Of course, we speak of it, that we did this, to show how we implement our CSR policy. This is part of it.' (C14)

   > 'They find it of interest, because they're players that want to contribute locally. For them it's CSR policy, that they play a participating role... For them, it's important.' (NPO2)

   A larger amount of companies (7) agreed on adopting CV programs not just to fulfil CSR expectations but to have a positive effect on non-profit organizations and the community. Here, firms typically had one of two goals in mind: providing support to non-profit organizations or making an impact on society. While both aim to make positive impressions on the community, they are seen as two progressive ways to help non-profit organizations and consequently the community. The first, support to NPOs, is considered to be a more basic form of assistance: companies that would like to help out non-profit organizations but only with relatively effortless tasks such as chores or social outings. On the other hand, companies that would like to make an impact on society are thought to go the extra mile and focus on activities that add real value to the community.

> ‘If you just position it as: if you want to be involved in the community for once, then it’s nice to do something like this. That was too meagre for us. It’s not always enough to be involved in the community to be successful.’ (C10)

> ‘I understand they go do something with each other for an afternoon, then they fulfil their CSR requirements on the one hand, and on the other hand it’s a team outing, and people turn out to really enjoy refurbishing a school. I get it all. But to contribute substantially to vulnerabilities, that requires something really different from a company.’ (NPO3)

When it came to giving **support to non-profit organizations**, two companies saw it as their sole purpose in benefiting the community, while three others saw it as complementary to the ability to use CV in making a significant impact.

> ‘With this, we contribute to alleviating a non-profit organization, that of course could also do the work itself, but where we can also offer this as support.’ (C2)

> ‘We go to projects, or organizations that are our partners, to do odd jobs. And why we do that is because you see that they typically have little money, and the money they have is usually spent on the goal of the organization. And that actually around it, for example a school, they want to teach the children. But little happens to the maintenance of the school. So that’s what we do, we just go in with 15 people. Then we’re there for a day, to do maintenance work.’ (C3)

> ‘We try to let the organization’s need be leading. So we’re not going to decide how to help them. While we can make suggestions, they have a want that we try to realize or complete. Not like: we want to go on a day trip with the elderly, so we’ll call an elderly home. That’s possible, then everyone is happy. But we prefer it the other way around.’ (C9)

Lastly, a total of five companies declared that their underlying goal for carrying out CV activities was to make an impact on the community. As mentioned earlier, three companiessaw working with non-profit organizations as complimentary step to achieving meaningful contributions. Two companies viewed **community impact** as their primary aim.

> ‘It sounds cliché but making an impact on society. We feel that as an organization, we have a large responsibility in society. We do a lot, also for customers, but there’s more than that. So actually, it’s our aim to contribute in that way too.’ (C6)

> ‘We really want to deliver. When we send people, we want the partner to say: that was useful. That we can really deliver added value, not just: I’ve been somewhere nice, I enjoyed it, but I don’t know what I realized. That’s not our intention.’ (C10)

Overall, companies were found to recognize CV programs fundamentally as means to give back to society. The one exception to the rule stated the following:

> 'It was founded in... actually with the goal to support employees with their volunteering and to inspire employees to start doing volunteering work. So not necessarily aimed at society but at employees that did nice things in their free time, and there wasn't really any sponsoring yet because that wasn't interesting.' (C4)

All other interviewed companies upheld that their CV activities were meant to target the community, whether it was a way for them to address CSR demands by being involved in the community, give basic support to non-profit organizations, or make a substantial impact on society and those in it.

2. **Company**

   Regarding the company perspective, a review of CV literature uncovered two types of goals, namely those related to a company's reputation and organizational commitment. Indeed, company reputation was named as CV program objective in seven cases. However, a distinction was made between 1) the company's reputation to customers and investors (**customer and investor relations)**, and 2) the company's reputation to (prospective) employees (**employer branding**).

   > 'Externally, we use it as marketing. Because it's good for your clients to see that you invest in this, as well as for future employees. They might think: I want to work for an organization that's aware of its environment. Not just hardcore work but also the ability to give something back. So, I think it can be useful in two ways for marketing.' (C13, 1)

   Out of these two types of company reputation, more companies (6) admitted to employing CV to be able to communicate a certain image to customers and investors.

   > 'We decided that we could bring more things to the outside. You always have to be careful that it doesn't come across as green-washing. What we do, should be very authentic, genuine really.' (C6)

   > 'The investors relations people said: nice, let's translate the CSR report to English so we can put it on the English website, where we present ourselves as a company.' (C9)

   Interestingly, intermediaries and non-profit organizations were more vocal about the adoption of CV programs for reputational effects: all interviewees (6) made mention of cases where companies aimed to improve their reputation.

   > 'Sometimes you get that feeling. Especially when they're firms with big names that want to organize a quick, one-off at the end of the year. Then we really get a signal, it has to be nice for their employees and they would love to show to the outside what they did. That makes it feel like it's really for their image.' (IM1)

On the other hand, only three out of 14 companies made mention of using CV to boost their reputation among (potential) employees. In turn, two intermediaries backed up the use of CV as effective recruitment tool.

> 'We facilitate a lot. People find it important that they work somewhere where there are opportunities, where they can do something for society in their boss's time. People find that important in their choice of employer nowadays.' (C12)

> 'What you see is, when you talk about the image for the labour market, it really has a positive impact on it.' (IM1)

Where reputation-related goals were modestly acknowledged to, organizational commitment was not mentioned by any of the participants when speaking of CV program goals. Instead, some parties (5) spoke of the positive effect of employees' pride through adopting CV programs; however, they typically did so in relation to company reputation and as such **organizational pride** was not found to be a goal on its own.

> 'That you can do this as an employee of ours, gives an incredibly proud feeling of the company. That the company makes it possible, facilitates, stimulates. We work for a beautiful company, they say. [...] If an employee comes back on Monday, so proud of our organization. Spread the word. That really is publicity.' (C9)

> 'If you ask them, or if they talk about it, that they do it because they are proud that their company makes it possible to do this. The side effect is there. But I don't see it as primary goal for setting up a program related to volunteering.' (IM1)

Whereas companies did not aim to have more pride in employees through CV, they did strive for more connected employees with **team building** being mentioned by seven firms to be a reason for running CV programs.

> 'We want to create as much synergy as possible among our employees. We have 140 companies, so it's fantastic that you get to know each other's company. That way, you create a family feeling, you bond. That's absolutely a deliberate choice.' (C7)

> 'I think we started about five years ago, that we offered it as part of our CSR. Show some community involvement, and we noticed that employees really liked to do volunteering for a day. It stimulates your collegiality, your team spirit, those kinds of affairs.' (C14)

Lastly, a company-serving CV goal was the improvement of **business operations**: three companies experienced CV programs to be helpful in gaining valuable insights into its customers.

> 'The nice thing is that we see that when our employees teach lessons or are a financial buddy, that it gives us insights into customers. Customers with payment issues, whether they are shown or not. How people think, or how they do not think at all. [...] It teaches people a lot on how to deal with customers, so we learn from each other within the organization. That makes it very relevant.' (C9)

> 'We think it's important for our employees to really get in contact with our customers. [...] Our client, or customer, gets personal attention, it's a fun activity, an outing. And on the other hand, our employees got a better understanding of the experience of target groups, they got to know them better and were able to identify their needs.' (C11)

All in all, this study has partly confirmed a review of prior literature by identifying company reputation to be an important company-related goal among its participants. However, it has not found evidence for organizational commitment as CV program goal, and rather uncovered two additional goals: team building and business operations.

3. **Employee**

   The last benefactor and goal of CV programs were a company's employees. Section 2.4.1 uncovered two types of employee-serving goals, namely employee engagement and employee development. This study has found support for both: an overwhelming majority of interviewed firms (12) spoke of **employee engagement in CSR** as objective of CV programs, while another large number (9) targeted **employee development** through its CV endeavours.

   > 'As a company we also say that we find it very important for employee to do something for society. It says something about you as an employee, that you're willing to commit yourself selflessly for something. So, we just want to emphasize or support that. That people do that.' (C9)

   On the one hand, companies that targeted their CV program towards employees typically strove for getting large numbers of employees engaged.

   > 'Our aim is to have 15% of our employees participate in something or send in their own applications.' (C4)

   > 'The goal is to have as many employees as possible do volunteering work and to support them with that.' (C8)

   > 'At this point, we just want to give as many of our employees the opportunity to do this at least once.' (C10)

   > 'A lot of companies want goals such as how many employees they activated, so how many employees we activated in doing volunteering work. Frequently, they have a certain percentage of which they say: this year, we want to have forty per cent of the employees of this company to have done something with volunteering.' (IM1)

   On the other hand, companies intended not just to get their employees engaged but to develop them. Similar to literature findings, employee development was found to be targeted for two reasons: 1) **skill acquisition**, and 2) **community learning**. In case of the former, three firms operated CV programs in order to have their employees acquire and develop relevant skills.

> ‘This year, when it comes to assignments, we put down more firmly that we see it as learning experience for our employees. So, it’s a possibility that people have. Next to the ability to attend training, they can choose to do an assignment with our foundation. You learn so much, a week at a conference venue can’t beat that. So, we’re going to include it in our training catalogue.’ (C10)

> ‘We think it’s good for our employees, that they learn something from it. They become more agile. And also, more empathetic, it’s one of our company values to teach them to be empathetic and agile.’ (C11)

For the latter, five participants stated that CV was their means of having their employees become more aware of what is happening in society.

> ‘There are two goals. On the one hand, it’s important to be at the centre of society as office. And next to that, it provides a lot to yourself, not just satisfaction. It enlarges your world. I had never eaten Ghanaian before, or I could hardly image what it’d be like. It’s really nice to talk about it with someone. It enlarges your world.’ (C13, 2)

> ‘Other companies choose a wider range, to have their people make an impact on society and to give them a much broader view of what’s happening in society, who else lives in it, and what they can do for them. That has nothing to do with the company but a lot more with the people and giving them a broader view of the world, and to inspire them.’ (IM1)

> ‘Doing something together is a goal but it has also occurred that firms want to have their employees or departments do something that changes their minds. So, it’s not just the social component that it’s important but the ability to imagine what it’s like to be in someone else’s shoes.’ (IM2)

In short, those employers that would like to have their employees receive benefits from CV programs were found to have in mind employee engagement and employee development.

Overview of Results Regarding CV Program Goals

Adapting Figure 2.5, Figure 4.1 portrays the results regarding CV program goals as found in this study. Numbers in brackets refer to the amount of companies that verified the particular goal of being relevant for their organization, while blue-colored text indicates additions to earlier findings.

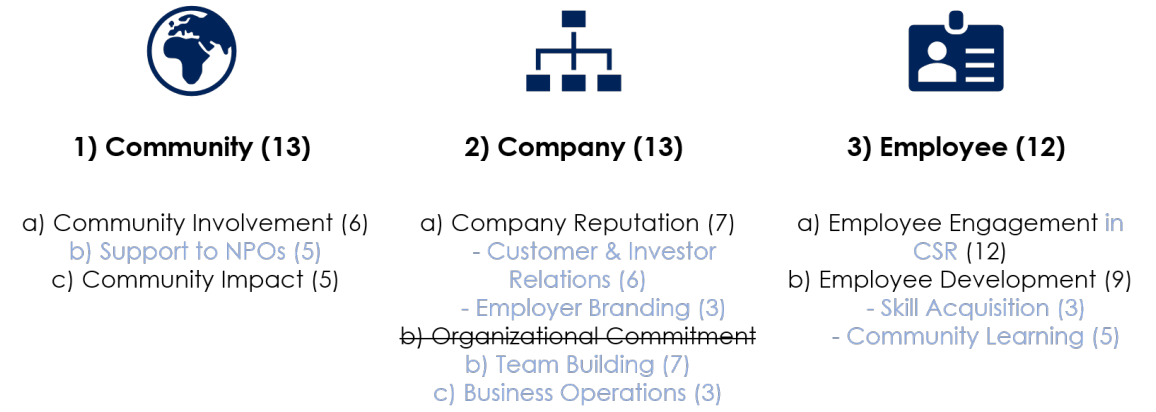


Figure 4.1: Overview of results regarding CV program goals

Source: This study

4.1.2 CV Program Design

Section 2.4.2 gave a broad overview of the design elements that companies can adapt to their wishes in order to create the CV program they deem fit. This study identified a vast array of design choices a firm can make, which partially confirmed earlier findings but also modified some. For one, present research has condensed the elements of recruitment and performance evaluation into that of 'support activities', all the while highlighting the significant role that communication plays. Then, it has extended the elements of program management, partnerships with NPOs, and the volunteering activity to include additional options. Regarding program management, decision control and coordination were grouped into the overarching organizational structure. The type of staff was not found to be of considerable importance in designing program management. Instead, the focus of the CV program, together with the policy set and support offered were discovered to be leading. Next, design questions pertaining to partnerships with NPOs were grouped into three choices: collaboration, partner selection, and use of intermediaries. The former category of type of organization was categorized as

sub-element of partner selection, while the fit with the company was regrouped into the CV program's focus as part of program management. While the use of intermediaries remained an important choice in partnerships with NPOs, a new category, named collaboration, was added to emphasize how companies and NPOs work together. Third and last, the design of the volunteering activity was broadened to include choices on its composition, features, and location. As training was not found to pose firms with many questions, it was dropped from the list of design choices as part of the volunteering activity. Given these changes, a detailed overview of the design elements each company has at its disposal can be found in Appendix A. Figure 4.2 provides a visual comparison of literature findings to this study.

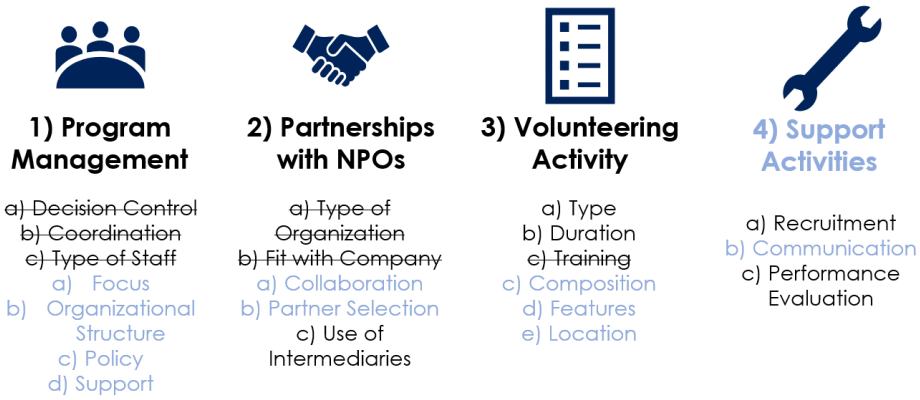


Figure 4.2: Overview of results regarding CV program design
Source: This study

4.2 Community-serving Goals and CV Program Design

The community concerns the first of three perspectives. This section will cover what companies can do in order to contribute to the community, in particular what measures they can take in order to decrease or increase their influence.

4.2.1 Community Involvement

To recap, community involvement deals with companies that would like to be involved in the community but only to a minimal extent. Their primary goal is to respond to CSR demands of the public, and their way of doing so is by offering whatever activities are able to show some degree of commitment to the community. Community involvement was mentioned by only 6 firms and interestingly, each of these firms did so in conjunction with other CV program goals. This could be an indicator that community involvement is typically of side interest to other goals; the goals that were mentioned most often were employee development (2), employee engagement in CSR (2), and team building (2). Others included company reputation (1) and business operations (1). With few firms considering community involvement to be their number one goal, scarcely any statements were made on the design elements that could help companies in achieving it. Still, two design elements were found to be related to community involvement: one-off activities and the use of intermediaries.

Firstly, one non-profit organization pointed out the ability to show community involvement simply by doing *one-off activities*. As already quoted in Section 4.1:

> 'I understand they go do something with each other for an afternoon, then they fulfil their CSR requirements on the one hand, and on the other hand it's a team outing, and people turn out to really enjoy refurbishing a school.' (NPO3)

Even though offering stand-alone CV activities can be seen as a logical choice for achieving low effort community involvement, its wider applicability can be questioned with only one interviewee mentioning its use. Whereas little support was found for the impact of the duration of an activity on the achievement of community involvement, more evidence was found for a second element: the **use of intermediaries**. It was established that companies who would like to get involved in the community in any way are best off using an intermediary. As discussed in Section 2.4.2, intermediaries prove useful because of their knowledge, expertise, and/or networking abilities. Especially for companies that are unsure of how to implement CV as CSR initiative, getting a third party involved can be valuable. Their experience in the field of community involvement can shed light on a company's individual case and help draft a plan of action. Two intermediaries commented on how their services may help firms achieve community involvement:

> ‘What we’re looking for, which is why we ask a lot of questions, is that we notice a lot of companies haven’t thoroughly thought through what it is they want exactly. They know they want to do something with community involvement, and they reach out to different parties. But in reality, they’re often still thinking about what they really want, and that makes it more difficult to see what they expect and to create a plan accordingly.’ (IM1)

> ‘You see companies struggle with the question: I want to do something with it, I have to do something with it, but what and how? That’s what we’re good at.’ (IM3)

In addition to this, intermediaries can also be useful for firms that may know what they want but not where to find it; third parties acting as connectors can help firms get involved in the community.

> ‘Businesses say: we have to be involved in the community, but we don’t really know how... There should be an exchange platform, where volunteering organizations can ask questions: we need this. Something like that.’ (NPO2)

On the other hand, companies can employ intermediaries to outsource the organization of their CV program. This allows them to save organizational work, while still getting involved in the community.

> ‘We do a lot with this one intermediary, because they have a large network of non-profit organizations. It’s easy. They buy the paint, all of that. So we don’t have to do it ourselves. That’s impossible.’ (C4)

> ‘The intermediary organizes for example a sports day and we make sure our people go there but we don’t do much for it.’ (C13, 1)

However, firms that want to save on time and effort when establishing CV programs to promote community involvement should be willing to spend financial resources. Intermediaries are usually companies themselves that look to earn from the organization of CV activities.

> ‘A company will call a health care facility and expect not to pay for volunteering activities. With us, they’ll be paying for volunteering. But they’re not paying for the voluntary work, they’re paying for the organization around it. In the end, I’m a commercial business. If you’re going to go karting, you’ll pay for the organization too. And you pay for the entry tickets to the kart centre. People don’t usually understand that our organization costs money too.’ (IM3)

Dependent upon the precise fees intermediaries charge and the services they offer, companies should decide themselves to what extent they need third parties to achieve their community involvement goal.

> ‘The question is whether they really deliver added value. If they have a large company network or a better overview of what’s happening in society than us, then it’s useful. But usually we don’t need it, or we’re not moving forward with them while they’re charging us.’ (C11)

> 'They're there, there are parties that will organize it. But that costs a lot of money. Then you still have a lot to do, before you've set it up together and it fits within your company's policy. We didn't pursue it, also because there's another person in between. They earn from it.' (C14)

All in all, using CV to get involved in the community seems a simple feat, as all a company has to do is any charitable activity involving volunteers. However, firms having as their primary goal have one main dilemma to consider when it comes to designing their CV program effectively. In particular, they should consider the trade-off between organizational work and financial resources. Firms that want to use CV to get involved in the community but do not have deep pockets are best off with taking its organization into own hands. On the other hand, companies that are willing to spend more money in order to show their involvement in the community can best make use of intermediaries. Third parties can devise suitable CV programs, organize volunteering activities, or make worthwhile connections between firms and non-profit organizations.

4.2.2 Support to NPOs

The second community-serving goal firms may have in mind when setting up CV programs was found to be actively supporting non-profit organizations. As handled in Section 4.1, this constitutes companies aspiring to relief non-profit organizations of basic tasks like routine duties or excursions. In total, 8 design elements were discovered that will help companies better achieve this goal, of which 5 were backed up by more than three independent sources.

To start with, companies can tailor their volunteering activities to better accommodate the non-profit's needs. They are able to do so by adopting **recurring activities**, as this leads companies to provide a certain degree of security to non-profits. As discussed in Section 2.3, these typically lack sufficient resources and are as such constantly searching for helping hands. By having activities recur rather than planning single events, companies support non-profit organizations through supplying a constant stream of volunteers. Three interviewees confirmed this, with one firm elaborating:

> 'There was an organization that organized activities for handicapped children each year, those activities recur every year and they need volunteers for it every year. So we said: we'll deliver a group of volunteers each year that can help you with that. That way, they knew what to expect.' (C14)

In addition, it allows for a stronger firm-NPO collaboration. Doing multiple activities gives companies and non-profit organizations the opportunity to learn from earlier experiences and improve accordingly. As such, repeating activities can be complemented with evaluating through *feedback from partners*, as was suggested by one interviewee:

> 'I think that's the most important to make it recur, that you help the organization you support and don't have to sort out what needs to happen each time. You know each other, you know how to communicate, you know what's expected, you can learn from certain moments. If the work was perhaps too little or the equipment wasn't ready. You can improve it each year, I think that's really good.' (C14)

In line with this, extending support to non-profit organizations can be done better by aiming for a *long-term collaboration* with the non-profit in question. Two participants suggested that committing to non-profit organizations for the long-term is a way of ensuring recurring events and as such a means to pledge commitment.

> 'It's important that the relationship is for the long term. Volunteering organizations know they can come back if they need more.' (C1, paraphrased)

> 'She organized it, so we had between five and eight projects yearly that we offered that people could register for. So those were projects that would come back each year. That's very good, I think, that you enter into a long-term partnership with an organization. That you say, each year we'll deliver a group of volunteers.' (C14)

An important element, however, to consider in the quest to support non-profits is the origin of the firm-NPO collaboration. For firms wanting to provide support, it is imperative to listen to the **need of the NPO**. This means that, rather than organizing activities that originate from the wants of the company, companies should assess where their help is really needed and adapt accordingly.

> 'Last year we really started to say in advance to non-profit organizations: what kind of jobs do you have? This way, we can create a menu that we can publish on our info net, so that teams that would like to do a community service team activity can already take a look on the website to see what jobs there are. Only then they come in contact with one of the employees of the foundation, we'll talk, and contact will be made with the non-profit organization. The job is already there, the need is already known.' (C9)

For firms that struggle to identify the needs of the community, the **use of intermediaries** can be fruitful. Intermediaries commonly have a large network of partners in the community, giving them the ability to match supply and demand.

> 'We use for example volunteering centres or intermediaries for acquiring projects.' (C1, paraphrased)

> 'If we struggle with finding a partner, we'll contact for example an intermediary. We have also participated in social marketplaces.' (C11)

Additionally, intermediaries can assure that companies effectively help non-profits by taking out of hand certain organizational tasks. This allows firms to focus on the activity that matters the most: the volunteering itself.

> 'We make sure all equipment is there. So you tax the organization, the institution, as little as possible. Because they don't have as much time to organize this. They have to take care of clients.' (IM3)

Still, two interviewees argue *against the use of intermediaries* as they say it strains the relationship between the firm and the non-profit organization.

> 'We have customers that are health care facilities. We approach them, you get paired with someone that does occupational therapy or something like that, and they come up with activities for that facility. That works a lot easier than with a business in between. And it saves us expenses, it'd rather have that money end up where I think it should end up.' (C8)

Whether companies will qualify to benefiting from an intermediary or not, another choice for firms to consider is how to divide responsibilities among itself and the non-profit it is working with. Placing **responsibility with the company** is another way of showing commitment to a non-profit organization, increasing the support the company can lend. This means the firm will be held accountable for certain responsibilities when organizing CV activities, such as the number of volunteers it will supply or the tasks it will carry out.

> 'On the other hand, also internally, what we sometimes hear from people that go... we say: it's voluntarily, not unconditional. You have conversations, they were going to do chores, and then at one point they say: it's not really working out well, can we do it a week later? No, because those people have organized all of it. They're busy, if it can't be moved. Of course, that's not possible, to just cancel.' (C9)

Nonetheless, shifting responsibilities towards the company may not be effective in itself. After all, businesses and non-profits have different ways of working and even verbal agreements may not be kept.

> 'For the social branch, the foundation, the conditions and risks are poorly defined. It's a more organic process, the agreement more verbal. But what if something goes wrong, even if it hasn't until now, what are we responsible for? It can't be that a product that has to be delivered isn't as expected.' (C1, paraphrased)

As a result, some participants suggest having **formalized responsibility**. By putting down the terms of the volunteering work on paper, both parties are aware of their end of the deal and understand what needs to be done to support the non-profit in an adequate way.

> 'We have contracts with them, thick piles of paper. You have to cover everything: the insurance, the security of your employees. It all has to be right, because you want to work with good partners that have everything together. Luckily, we haven't had anything crazy happen in the last years, but you had it in the past where they went sailing with this organization and the boats capsized. You don't want those kinda crazy things happen, so we pay attention to that.' (C12)

For the most part, companies aiming to give back to the community by supporting certain non-profit organizations should pay close attention to the partnerships they engage in. While a

recurring duration of CV activities can impact the provision of support, most design elements positively affecting the goal to support non-profits are related to firm-NPO collaborations. For instance, companies should put the need of the non-profit above their own wishes to ensure their volunteering help is actually called for. Here, intermediaries can help in identifying community needs and matching them to firms looking to pay their dues. Other than this, shifting responsibility from the non-profit to the firm will ensure companies do not burden the organization with their volunteering aspirations; formalized arrangements between the two help clear up the division of responsibilities and focus attention to where it is needed. Lastly, by establishing partnerships for the long run, companies give off a commitment to the non-profit they are working with. Seeking feedback from partners in the meantime allows companies to improve volunteering work done and makes them better able to deliver the necessary support.

4.2.3 Community Impact

Lastly, companies that target the creation of substantial value for the community have 4 proven design tools at their disposal, as well as 5 other exploratory suggestions of what could work well. These have to do with the type and duration of the volunteering activity, the focus and measurement of CV programs, and collaborations with non-profits.

The first design element that reinforces the impact companies may have on the community is **skill-based volunteering**. Firms believe that taking advantage of in-house knowledge and expertise is the best way to make a contribution to society.

> 'I think what's powerful is that we look at what knowledge we have in house. Not just giving away money but how you can use your knowledge for vulnerable groups in society. I think that's really good and that it can make you unique. And contribute to the projects we support.' (C2)

> 'We really want to help with our knowledge and expertise, and we see that as more valuable than just giving money. We think this has a lot more effect.' (C6)

After all, as seen in Section 2.3.3, most non-profit organizations lack the resources to employ corporations for potential business issues they may have. As such, companies that would like to make an impact can do so by using their professional powers without being compensated for it.

> 'There are a lot of organizations that do a lot of great things but that don't have the money to employ us for the problems they have or the help they need. So in that way we want to help them, on a pro-bono basis.' (C6)

Sharing skills and knowledge for the greater good does not necessarily require job-specific knowledge but can also be done by using generic business skills. What matters is that corporate volunteers are usually professionals that are qualified for jobs that require a certain amount of skills.

> ‘Actually, it’s always on the basis of expertise, so we look at the specific questions a partner has. Then we ask for example a financial specialist or someone with knowledge of health care or a risk analyst.’ (C10)

> ‘The added effect is that the job coach, particularly those that work in banks, have a network of companies and opportunities. Those are employees who are in the middle of the labour market and the business community. That’s a golden goose.’ (NPO2)

Nevertheless, putting skills to use may not be the only design choice that matters in achieving maximum community impact; the combination with **series of activities** seems particularly valuable. By spreading out multiple volunteering activities over longer periods of time, corporate volunteers can build upon earlier work done and as such achieve more results.

> ‘It can be one-off or structurally, we have a lot of home administration volunteers. These are people that go to people’s homes weekly for at least a year to help sort out the administration. You can see the effect immediately, you can see someone walk out the door lighter or after a year you can teach someone to do their finances independently again.’ (C2)

> ‘You get a lot of results in three to four weeks. Someone has started moving. Even if there’s a woman that’s just starting her participation in the labour market, she can tell everybody after 10 weeks what she wants with a smile on her face. While before, she was like quiet like a mouse sitting in a corner who didn’t dare to say anything.’ (NPO2)

Companies that are willing to strive for community impact should, however, recognize the responsibility that comes with offering longer trajectories of volunteering work. Combining volunteering with regular work can already lead to difficulties, and these increase when employees’ benevolence is called upon for multiple occasions.

> ‘We have seen these past years that projects that require multiple contact moments are difficult for people to plan. We didn’t get that many applications, but people really like projects that are one-off. A day.’ (C12)

Then again, it could be argued that commitment to a cause is inescapable and firms have to make choices one way or another. In addition to putting into use professional skills and knowledge or volunteering for longer periods of time, a company can increase its impact on society by having a **focus in line with business**. This way, the company can devote its efforts towards a certain target and as such achieve more results in a particular area. Making this in line with business ensures the firm has the relevant knowledge and skills necessary to make that contribution.

> ‘If you don’t have a focus, you’re using a scattergun approach. While if you have focus, you can say: we have all worked on digital skills for this number of hours leading to this. It’s always a difficult discussion, how are you going to measure that impact. But if you don’t focus, you’ll never get there.’ (C12)

However, companies that would like to increase their impact by narrowing the focus of their CV program should consider its possible disadvantages. In particular, employees may not enjoy work-related volunteering, or feel left behind when existing initiatives will be put to a halt due to a renewed focus.

> 'We have a clear focus, financial self-reliance. But it's possible, and we know that, that colleagues would like to do something different. Colleagues that are busy with financial matters each day could prefer to help out at a petting zoo for once. We don't offer that. So, you miss volunteers that would like to make a contribution but not by being part of a program like we have defined it.' (C2)

> 'It's difficult sometimes, because there's the logic to implement CSR initiatives that are linked to your overall mission. [...] But you have to be careful with radically crossing out things that are already existing within your organization, and initiatives that have already been taken. That can cause friction.' (IM1)

Whether choosing to aim the CV program's attention at a certain goal or not, it is important to keep track of what has been done: **impact measurement**. To measure is to know, and by putting in place controls a firm can better understand whether success is being achieved or if adjustments to its program need to be made.

> 'And impact management, I find that very important. You can do a lot but if you don't know what effect it has you can ask yourself: to what extent do we know if it contributes or not?' (C6)

Still, few firms measure their effectiveness, and if they do it is commonly related to employee results rather than community impact.

> 'We don't measure results, not the hours nor the impact. Impact measurement is going to be difficult. We look at feedback from employees and volunteering organizations.' (C1, paraphrased)

Reason for the lack of impact measurement was given to be the difficulty of measuring, as well as the time investment related to it.

> 'It's really difficult to know, you never know exactly how many people you impact. It's still a lot of guess work but we know the head office is working on improving that. I think a lot of companies struggle with this.' (C6)

> 'In an ideal world, which is not here yet, we can measure what the commitment of our employees really contributes to financial self-reliance. As financial volunteer, you work for about a year and someone goes into debt aid or stays on its own feet and has some contact with a volunteer. They get into debt or not, they can do it themselves or not. That's nice, you can pretty much monitor that. And teaching at schools, some research is being done: does it increase whether you've been in a classroom or not. But what's ultimately the effect on a child's future, all of that isn't measured.' (C9)

In order to improve impact measurement and subsequently community impact, several suggestions have been made. Firstly, one of the intermediaries suggests making *use of intermediaries* to have the work done for them:

> 'We have the possibility to make an impact report for a company, so we measure for them how many hours of volunteering work they did, for which target group they did that, we can arrange that for them. Those are types of services; depending on the partnership we offer all of them or we offer some of them.' (IM1)

Alternatively, impact measurement can be complemented by *setting targets*. Here, a target is defined as the quantification of a goal; according to two parties, this is a practical way of translating wishes into measurable results.

> 'We try to increase self-reliance with 15%, that's basically the mission. Based on that goal. It's very concrete, a horizon for us.' (C2)

> 'And I think quantifying your goals, that's something that could be done a lot better by a lot of companies. We want to do something with CSR, we want to do something with children with language deficiency, but what do you want to achieve? It's doing a follow-up: I want to achieve this in this city in this year. That gives more direction.' (IM1)

The last way that impact measurement can be complimented is by asking *feedback from partners*. One interviewee suggests that non-profit organizations may provide valuable information on whether CV activities actually lead to the achievement of set goals. After all, the non-profit is closest to its beneficiaries and likely to know the most about how to cater to their needs.

> 'The partners also evaluate, so they give back to us how the assignment went, how they liked the expert, and if the expert was able to deliver what was expected. That's how it goes, almost business-like. It helps if people feel involved and can put their heart in it but they have to deliver value too.' (C10)

In line with this, some interviewees commented on how their partnership with NPOs could have an effect on their ability to contribute to society. For one, it was deemed important to listen to the *need of the NPO* when designing CV activities by one participant:

> 'I always check: we have projects, can you use our help? And if yes, how should we implement it? What should we do, what shouldn't we do. In the past, we organized large-scale mail sorting activities, for example. But they aren't necessarily helped with that because it costs them a lot of time with organizing. So we have to conclude that's not how we should do it, at least not for the organization in question.' (C2)

Here, it was also noted that the number of employees involved in volunteering can have an impact too; large-scale activities can be especially taxing for non-profit organizations, and as such composing *individual activities* could be preferable. This insight was, however, only supported by two interviewees:

> ‘Usually individual. And that’s because we notice that projects aren’t necessarily served by having 50 people show up, at least not with our projects.’ (C2)

> ‘In principle, each status holder that participates is linked to a job coach that accompanies and coaches the status holder during, but also after, the training. [...] The social services customer managers can’t do all of that, they have way too many customers in their portfolio. They can’t deliver that customization that’s indispensable for a successful integration, I discovered. If you don’t do that, the chance for a successful integration is almost nil.’ (NPO2)

Lastly, it was suggested that placing more *responsibility with the NPO* would help achieve greater impact. One participant backed this up by reasoning that CV should not be a one-sided undertaking but rather a co-creative process, where both parties get involved to generate the most value possible.

> ‘That works really well, because it prevents a consultant from doing an analysis and giving advice that will be forgotten and doesn’t get used. You want to make sure in a collaboration like that, that people can start straight away with what they can bring to the table. It’s more co-creative, you’re working together with people what will help to make the next step.’ (C10)

Another participant states that the danger of giving too much is that the non-profit organization becomes dependent upon the company it is working with, and as such advocates protecting non-profits from becoming too reliant by keeping matters into own hands.

> ‘Imagine we stop existing, who’ll do it then? They have to want to become self-supporting too. I think the times where someone puts down a large bag of money in Africa, those are over. And I think the transfer of knowledge, motivating to self-development, that those are the most important.’ (C3)

With this in mind, firms that put their wish to make a positive impact on society above other CV program goals should pay attention to several design elements. When they go about designing their CV program, they should consider the kind of activities they offer to their employees to participate in. Activities that make use of an employee’s skills, that are done individually, and take place over prolonged periods over time are particularly fruitful. Furthermore, companies are urged to narrow the focus of their program; this way, they can better allocate their resources and invest in what they are best able to contribute to. However, regardless of what their CV program looks like, it is important for firms to track their progress. By using impact measurement tools, they can stay on top of their results and adjust course where necessary. Setting targets makes for a functional approach to measuring whether impact goals are achieved and feedback from partners should be taking into consideration. If desired, companies can make use of intermediaries to implement performance controls. Lastly, it can be of importance to keep in mind the division of responsibilities in firm-NPO collaborations. While companies may want to give their best in pursuing community impact, they should assess whether their generosity is moving non-profits forward or potentially leading to unwanted dependencies.

4.2.4 Overview of Community-serving Goals and Design

Companies intending to serve the community are best off directing their attention to their partnerships with NPOs. Non-profits are experts in the field of societal issues, and as such firms aiming to support them should base their volunteering programs on their needs instead of own wants. Here, the use of intermediaries can help firms in identifying where their help is required; firms wishing to put minimal effort in showing community involvement can also call upon their services, in this case for taking out of hand the organization of CV activities. When it comes to dividing responsibility, companies aspiring to support NPOs are best off accepting the bulk of organizational work in order to minimize strain put on the receiving organization. Other than that, formalizing its partnership will clear up what each party will be held accountable for. Putting in writing the terms and conditions of its volunteerism will clarify what corporate volunteers should be committed to, increasing their ability to support the NPO where necessary. A last way for firms to guarantee its assistance to non-profits is by making activities recurring. This way, the organization not only benefits from help at present time but is also assured of it in the future. However, those corporations that pledge to make a real change in the community are subject to additional requirements. Rather than having activities recur now and then, achieving community impact favours a series of volunteering acts where corporate volunteers can build upon earlier work to generate greater results. At the same time, having employees put to use their skills and knowledge will allow society to profit from valuable resources at little cost, improving company's net contributions. Targeting these efforts towards a specific target will further enlarge its impact, albeit in a smaller area. However, this focus should be in line with business in order to ensure the company's in-house assets are actually compatible with what the community needs. After all, a fish cannot be judged by its ability to climb a tree, and nor should a carpenter for its capacity in solving financial problems. Instead, long-term impact is achieved by introducing appropriate measurement systems, with which companies can keep track of their CV program's performance and adapt accordingly. Figure 4.3 shows visually how CV program design and community-serving CV program goals relate.

CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM DESIGN			CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM GOALS		
			Community Involvement	Support to NPOs	Community Impact
Program Management	Focus				In line with business*
	Organizational Structure	Coordination			
		Decision Control			
		Place			
	Policy	Freedom of Choice Employees			
		Freedom of Choice Organization			
	Support				
Partnerships with NPOs	Collaboration	Length		Long-term	
		Origin		Need NPO*	Need NPO
		Responsibility		With company* Formalized *	With NPO
	Selection Partner	Type			
		Criteria			
	Use of Intermediaries		Yes*	Yes* No	Yes
Corporate Volunteering Activity	Composition		One-off		Individual
	Duration			Recurring*	Series*
	Features				
	Location				
	Type				Skill-based volunteering*
Support Activities	Communication	Method			
		Visibility			
	Performance Evaluation	Feedback		From partners	From partners
		Measurement			Impact measurement* Setting targets
	Recruitment	Method			
		Selection			

Figure 4.3: Overview of the relationship between community-serving goals and the design elements of corporate volunteering programs

Source: This study

4.3 Company-serving Goals and CV Program Design

Section 2.4.1 has uncovered that firms engaging in CV not only do so because of other-oriented motives; typically, companies would like to achieve a win-win situation by having CV not serve society alone but themselves too. This section will consider what goals companies have in mind and the design elements that will help them achieve these goals.

4.3.1 Company Reputation

1. **Customer & Investor Relations**

   First of all, a goal that companies had in mind was their reputation facing customers and investors. In order for companies to portray their charitable image, it is imperative for them to communicate their CV program to the outside and as such have **external visibility**. Here, creating a certain amount of awareness is key.

   > 'For these messages, for what they are, the traffic is good. But it's not as if you make a huge splash with an image like that. It's more good news and that sells less than bad news. But it's being seen, and that's the most important. The traffic is less, relatively, but it's visible and it's being seen by thousands of people each time, so that's nice. That's already a gain.' (C11)

   > 'We communicate it in the confirmation: it'd be good if you communicate your initiative so others are aware of your beautiful initiative. It helps, that's why I ask: how was it, make pictures.' (NPO1)

   However, companies pushing their external communication too much are at risk of losing their authenticity; customers and investors may feel that CV initiatives are used solely for self-serving purposes. For this reason, what helps is designing communication methods such that materials are published **by another party**. This conveys to customers and investors that the CV program in place is appreciated by people other than the company itself.

   > 'If you tell a colleague yourself you did something good, you'll colleague will say 'yes sure, whatever, don't show off, turn it down a notch'. But when someone else says it about you, your colleague will say: 'if someone else says it, it must be true'.' (IM2)

   > 'We advertise it. If there's a graduation ceremony, we will call out that the organization in question made itself available. For them it's a certain appearance, stemming from their CSR position. We bring that in. There'll be a piece in the papers, or on TV it'll show: with help from, thanks to, those kinds of things.' (NPO2)

   Another way of enhancing communication around CV programs to improve corporate reputation is through *reporting*. This method has been applied by only one participant, which suggests that formalizing communication around CV through the use of social reporting will establish

credibility. As already quoted in part in Section 4.1, creating CSR reports translates CV activities into tangible products, which in turn can be shared with stakeholders.

> 'For the first time in 2017, we made an annual review in which we show what we do. That makes it very tangible. When our CEO saw that, he said: we have to send this to all our employees, together with the annual report. The investors relations people said: nice, let's translate the CSR report to English so we can put it on the English website, where we present ourselves as a company.' (C9)

The same participant argues that what helps here is *setting targets*.

> 'Maybe an incredibly great compliment was one we got in October, that's when our mid-term targets are shared with our investors and shareholders and internally. As one of the first, at least as first insurance company, we formulated a non-financial target to our investors and shareholders for our foundation's activities.' (C9)

Lastly, what is supposed to help in enhancing company reputation towards customers and investors relates to partnership with NPOs. In particular, firms should consider their partner selection and identify *excluded parties*. Non-profit organizations with poor reputations of their own will harm the company's reputation as well, and as such firms are best off refusing to work with certain associations. This was supported by two participants:

> 'It has to contribute to society, and it can't be related to very outspoken things such as activism. That's difficult with our company's brand, to be associated with that.' (C6)

> 'A self-evident example is that we won't be working with partners that are involved in local conflicts. The independence. A community goal that we as company can stand behind, we give our name to it so you don't want to risk getting a bad name because you go into business with an unreliable partner.' (C10)

On the whole, companies wanting to improve their image towards customers and investors should try striking a balance between being visible yet genuine. In order for stakeholders to positively think of the firm's CV program, they should be aware it exists in the first place and communication surrounding its program is indispensable. However, exorbitant publicizing of CV activities may have customers and investors question if the firm is honestly concerned with community problems or instead is blowing its own trumpet. As such, companies that would like to increase awareness but remain sincere can make use of other parties. Having the non-profit the company volunteers for or intermediaries it works with put out word on its good work comes across as more authentic. In addition, it could publish CSR reports in order to manufacture a more objective image of its philanthropic endeavours. Setting targets helps with obtaining this objectivity by putting measurable numbers on achieved results. Lastly, companies should pay attention to partnering with certain NPOs: those with a bad image of their own could contaminate the company's and as such should be excluded.

2. **Employer Branding**

Other than being seen in a better light by customers and investors, the company can attempt to improve its image to employees. This includes both employees currently employed at the organization, as well as promising candidates the company seeks to hire. With only three participating firms making use of CV for this reason, no design element was found to be significant. However, three different recommendations were made by three or less, and will be discussed as they may prove an interesting venue for further research.

Firstly, in order to improve employer branding, it was considered important for a company to increase its CV program's *external visibility* as part of a wider communication agenda by two interviewees. This was especially important for recruiting new employees, as showing the CV program to the outside demonstrates the opportunities these employees could have if they would start working at the organization.

> 'People like to sell it. Doing good and being green is a trend nowadays. So, we pay attention to it, externally. [...] I think young people like it, that they think: if I will start working there, there's the possibility to do volunteering. I know some people really aspire that.' (C13, 1)

However, as part of the company's policy regarding CV programs, it was considered important to *take into account target groups*. People differ in their desire to engage in volunteering through the workplace, and as such firms should consider when and where to advertise CV. According to one participant, young people in particular were a good audience to expose the CV program to.

> 'In presentations for future trainees, the foundation gets to speak. Young people are looking for more: meaningfulness, giving back, those kinds of things. It helps your company when you're trying to recruit them.' (C9)

Lastly, the degree to which the company lends *support* to its employees is considered to matter. As quoted earlier in Section 4.1, one firm backs up the thought that having CV programs in place is important for employees nowadays; yet, in order to improve the employer brand, employers should go the extra mile and actively provide support systems to cater to their employees' needs.

> 'We facilitate a lot. People find it important that they work somewhere where there are opportunities, where they can do something for society in their boss's time. People find that important in their choice of employer nowadays.' (C12)

As can be seen, the improvement of employer branding through the adoption of CV programs has as much to do with the company's inside as its outside. One the one hand, for recruiting purposes, the CV program should be noticeable to new hires. On the other hand, in order to

improve its reputation with existing personnel, it should walk the talk and contribute resources and adapt the CV program to the needs and wants of its employees. Still, it is important to keep in mind that few participants commented on using CV as employer branding technique. With limited proven validity of these results, much remains unknown about what really matters for firms striving to improve their ability to attract and retain talent.

4.3.2 Team Building

The second type of company-serving goal is team building. There are several ways in which companies can increase the bonding between its employees, starting with the composition of **team activities**. Unsurprisingly, activities performed in teams are an effective way of encouraging team building and CV is no exception. As employees get to see each other in a setting different than the workplace, their dynamics change and new connections form.

> 'The beautiful thing about the different company outing, what I noticed, is that everyone is equal during that day. So, if you go with your department, then the manager isn't wearing a suit and the telephone operator, in a manner of speaking, they all have the same task. That's accompanying someone in a wheelchair. You get such great storytelling from it, because you suddenly see: that boss that's usually very formal and distant has human feelings because he has to attend to a 92-year old and he's responsible for that day.' (NPO1)

A similar mechanism comes at play with the arrangement of **firm-wide activities**. Rather than volunteering in a group with colleagues that are already familiar, this composition of CV activities includes employees from different parts of the organization. This allows staff to get in contact with fellow employees it would usually not and form new ties.

> 'I think larger events, what's really nice about those is that you get to know colleagues from other departments all of a sudden. It's such a large organization, people don't know each other anymore. Especially nowadays, we're all doing flexible work so a lot of people work at home. Some people aren't visible at all and then you suddenly run into each other. It binds a lot.' (C8)

> 'If you do a team outing, there are people you already know or have already worked with. With a project like coaching, when you attend the briefing where all people go to that participate, you see different people from the organization. The next time, you greet each other instead of walking past each other. I have met so many people because I'm part of the network.' (C12)

In addition to this, one party suggest using *selection criteria* for the employees that are allowed to take part in volunteering activities. By creating a diverse group of corporate volunteers and ensuring no former connections exist, new ones can be shaped.

> 'I always select the people based on, sounds very lame, but to create an as divers group as possible. So, I pay attention to age, gender, function, and the business. We find it important, also to get as much as interaction as possible within our organization, for you to get to know

> each other in a different way and to find each other too. That's really the power, I believe, of our construction trip. I participated in a construction trip once too. I have something, something's bothering me, and then I start thinking: who could I call? It's a really easy step to contact someone you've been on a construction trip with. It creates an indescribable bond, we always hear that.' (C7)

Another party states that companies can also select their participants according to target groups. This way, specific groups of the organization are encouraged to bond.

> 'For example, one organization is our partner, but they have interns working at different offices throughout the country. So, we have a location in the Netherlands where they have an afternoon together with 40 interns. A lot of large partners do that. As a kind of bonding, having something in common, a joint kick-off.' (NPO1)

Conversely, two interviewees believe what matters is not just getting together but rather having a *joint ending*. Closing off CV activities in an informal way allows for employees to share their impressions and to bond over the experience.

> 'Afterwards, we drink a cup of coffee together and they say: it was so much fun, did you also have that one and that one? You get to know each other, you see that too.' (C12)

> 'They didn't arrange anything. There were no drinks afterwards, a central moment. You see the group come back, this was a group of 150 people, and then, what happens: nothing. You see them slowly leave home. We gave that as feedback to the customer: don't do this again. A day like this, you have to end it, even if it's just a beer afterwards, a quick toast. It also means you share your experiences with colleagues, talk about it, and come back on Monday. This was on a Friday, everyone goes home all enthusiastic. And continue on Monday. No, you want to keep that energy.' (IM3)

At the same time, other interviewees believe what matters is the type of work done. Specifically, one participant highlights the ability of *social work* to encourage team building among corporate volunteers.

> 'What you see on the faces of the participants, that you can make someone this happy with something so small, that's really the connection you have with your colleagues. Committing to someone else, that's something really small you don't really think about.' (NPO1)

Another interviewee opposes this idea and believes that any type of volunteering, including *hands-on volunteering* will do the trick.

> 'I think it's a good one to get together, or with each other. And I think that's exactly the same for cleaning up litter in the Vondelpark. [...] I think that one of those, a team activity for the foundation, that's *the* way to get to know your colleagues in a different way.' (C8)

However, this argument is extended by stating that any type of volunteering will work as long as the company will *take into account target group*. Different employees have different interests, and in order to engage employees effectively in CSR initiatives (more on this in Section 4.4), the company has to consider what works well and what does not.

> 'If you ask me what activity is most suited for that, I can't give you a sensible answer. It depends on the people, and it depends on the activity. But mostly on the people that carry out the activity.' (C8)

Overall, companies aiming to improve the connections between their employees should assure they carry out volunteering activities in groups—either with direct colleagues or with staff from all parts of the company. This being the most important, some other suggestions made concern other elements of the CV activity, as well as CV program policy and support activities. Particularly, what is believed to matter is the ability to close off CV activities together in order to bond over the sharing of experiences. Then, the actual activity performed can be of different nature. One interviewee considers activities that concern working with others as fruitful, while another sees hands-on volunteering in general as valuable. However, arguably more important is that the volunteering activity chosen fits with what employees would like to do; after all, without them participating, bonding will not be able to happen. Lastly, the use of selection criteria can aid companies in creating a more diverse group, and as such encourage the most team building.

4.3.3 Business Operations

The last CV program goal that supports the company perspective is the improvement of business operations. CV can contribute to added value through a range of avenues and has different design elements that can help in its way.

The first avenue of advancing business operations is by gaining insight into customers. For one, this can be achieved through the adoption of **skill-based volunteering**. By calling upon an employee's professional capabilities, volunteering activities allow for further development of know-how that can later be applied in their day-to-day jobs. As quoted in Section 4.1:

> 'The nice thing is that we see that when our employees teach lessons or are a financial buddy, that it gives us insights into customers. Customers with payment issues, whether they are shown or not. How people think, or how they do not think at all. [...] It teaches people a lot on how to deal with customers, so we learn from each other within the organization. That makes it very relevant.' (C9)

In effect, through the development of employees—which will be discussed in more detail in Section 4.4—the firm is able to transfer community learning to the business domain and subsequently generate returns. Even so, skill-based volunteering by itself may not be sufficient in producing business results. Interviewees express the need to combine the use of professional skills with a **focus in line with business**. After all, collecting information from customers is only possible when the CV activity brings employees in contact with them.

> 'I'm not giving up, so I'm speaking with Dutch health insurers. We have a care provider, a youth provider that owns foster homes but also provides guidance at home to children that have problems. They're all professionals. We said: wouldn't it be nice if you have your people do something as a volunteer. Because you learn a lot as professional, a lot of professionals think they can't let go of things. While if you've been a volunteer for a while, you see the importance of a volunteer.' (NPO3)

A second way in which firms can improve their business operations is by winning customers, which can also be done by tailoring the CV program's policy to be in line with the company's core business. Participants believed that customers are more likely to support companies that have a CV program that is intuitive, such as one that conforms CV activities to its usual work.

> 'It should fit your business. If you're an energy company that installs solar panels on top of health care institutions, or at schools, then I think that's a very good story. I, as customer, understand why part of my money goes there. While if you, as energy company, have a steam train drive around in someone's backyard, I would be thinking: why?' (IM3)

> 'I see the win-win. The butcher that does it, fine, feel free. But health insurers, that's really a win. Then you can see what happens to the most vulnerable. It makes you a better professional. It makes you a better insurance policy maker, it simply makes you a better person.' (NPO3)

The opposite is also believed to be true: having a *focus not in line with business* ***negatively*** impacts your ability to create added value. According to one participant:

> 'What are you going to bring to the outside, what do you do as a company that makes sense to your client and to the outside? For example, I think an energy company that finances a lot of random things is difficult. I get that, for example this other organization, is concerned with a solar challenge. I understand it as customer, I find it very logical. But they also have activities of which I say: I don't get them. So, you have to wonder whether, other than being noble and doing the right thing, it adds value to you as a company. Or if it doesn't belong to another company.' (IM3)

With this in mind, this same participant believes that firms wanting to establish a focus of their program are best off limiting *bottom-up decision control*.

> 'It's all well-meant but if you develop a vision it's never bottom-up. But somehow if you develop a vision surrounding social entrepreneurship, we want it to be bottom-up. Because we are afraid to say no to people that come up with nice initiatives. Only then you see CV programs being run of which we have to say: sorry, you can't do anything with it. While when an IT company does something with for example knowledge and the power to help schools develop in the field of IT, I get it as customer.' (IM3)

Nonetheless, with only one party defending this technique for achieving business improvement, further research is necessary.

The final ways in which companies can work on business operations through adopting CV programs are again related to the activity itself. Two interviewees recommend the *participation of customers* in CV activities. Taking customers along to CV projects allows them to get a first-hand

experience of the firm's virtuous activities as well as get in better contact with the organization. This can spark conversations and lead to the development of better customer relationships.

> 'What we also do. Our partners, or suppliers, they can participate too. Our international office works with an administration firm that does all the bookkeeping, two of its people came along to the construction trip. They finance the whole construction trip themselves. They simply get a bill at the end of the construction trip. And customers too. We also have customer trips, where we take customers.' (C7)

> 'Where possible we work with health care institutions with which we have a business relationship. [...] Sometimes we gained more insights, or we started lateral conversations with the clients or staff of the organization. That impacts our business, or the customer contact, or the relationship between the health care provider and our company. It's more the feedback we got, we consider that very valuable too.' (C11)

A last advice on the CV design elements that improve business operations is to make events *recurring*. This ensures that a firm's charitable actions will not lose significance but rather continue to generate value over time. This suggestion was made by one interviewee:

> 'In spite of all good intentions, from the people too, that they had a great day and want to do something again next year. But the remaining 364 days a year they're not doing anything with it. That doesn't necessarily have to be a bad thing, but it means that companies that do approach it that way, that they are able to set themselves apart with it.' (IM3)

As can be seen, more needs to be done in order to understand the ways in which CV program design can help add value to a company's operations. However, this study has been able to provide some preliminary results, showing that the most important design elements to be skill-based volunteering and having a focus in line with business. Having employees employ skills in CV activities helps them develop competencies that can be transferred to business operations, while aligning the CV program with these operations allows employees to get in contact with customers and gain valuable insights simultaneously. Furthermore, matching the CV programs' policy with the firm's improves customer relations by attaining approval for the use of resources for CSR activities. Even more, it was believed that having a focus *not* in line with business would have a negative effect on improving business operations. However, this result was not substantiated by multiple sources. This was the same case for some other suggestions made, which included minimizing bottom-up decision control, having customers participate in CV activities, and making CV activities recurring. While these results provide a first direction for grasping the design at the root of helping companies achieve business growth, further research is required to verify and extend these findings.

4.3.4 Overview of Company-serving Goals and Design

As much as companies are doing to pay their dues, CV has also been found to be used for obtaining personal benefits. While no design elements turned out to be significantly valuable in improving its reputation as employer, firms hoping to be seen in a better light by customers and investors were in more luck. In particular, a firm can boost its customer and investor relations by focusing on external communication. Rather than corresponding its good deeds to the public itself, common advice is to have communication done by another party. Perceptions on CV program are found to shift from self-serving to sincere when anyone but the firm itself speaks of its virtuousness; a similar mechanism comes at play when companies publish objective reports instead of self-proclaimed stories on the success of their initiatives. Still, companies that are doing good simply to look good are walking on a thin line and should beware of overselling their real value in the community. Yet, value may not accrue to society alone: tacit knowledge may be obtained through volunteering, which can in turn improve a firm's business operations. Those corporations that introduce CV for this reason should adjust their program to fit with its day-to-day business. For example, insurance companies can gain valuable insights on particular customers by experiencing their viewpoint first-hand through volunteering at health care institutions. However, benefits are not only obtained through the supply side; customers are more likely to support firms that operate CV programs that are intuitive, such as those that seek for alignment with its operations. Additionally, creating a positive impact on the value chain can be done by having employees undertake skill-based volunteering; know-how obtained through volunteering can later be applied to innovate regular business activities. A last way in which companies hope to strengthen organizational performance is not through its operations but rather the people that perform them. Team building can be a powerful mechanism for improving employee morale and is achieved in a fairly straightforward way. All a company wishing to improve bonding among its employee has to do is bring them together, either by organizing team activities or by arranging firm-wide volunteering days. Where team outings merely require firms to shift the purpose of the activity from doing something together to doing something together *for others*, uniting employees from different parts of the organization may prove more of a challenge. Nonetheless, especially those connections that were not existing yet may bring the greatest value to the firm. Figure 4.4 displays how CV program design contributes to the achievement of company-serving CV program goals.

CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM DESIGN			CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM GOALS			
			Reputation			
			Customer & Investor Relations	Employer Branding	Team Building	Business Operations
Program Management	Focus					In line with business* None/not in line with business (-)
	Organizational Structure	Coordination				Bottom-up (-)
		Decision Control				
		Place				
	Policy	Freedom of Choice Employees				
		Freedom of Choice Organization		Take into account target group	Take into account target group	
	Support			Yes		
Partnerships with NPOs	Collaboration	Length				
		Origin				
		Responsibility				
	Selection Partner	Type				
		Criteria	Excluded parties			
	Use of Intermediaries					
Corporate Volunteering Activity	Composition				Team* Firm-wide*	Participation customers
	Duration					Recurring
	Features					
	Location					
	Type				Social work Hands-on volunteering	Skill-based volunteering*
Support Activities	Communication	Method	By another party*			
		Visibility	External* Reporting	External		
	Performance Evaluation	Feedback			Joint ending	
		Measurement		Setting targets		Impact measurement
	Recruitment	Method				
		Selection			Criteria	

Figure 4.4: Overview of the relationship between company-serving goals and the design elements of corporate volunteering programs

Source: This study

4.4 Employee-serving Goals and CV Program Design

The last perspective of CV program goals is that of the employee. A plethora of companies recognized the ability of CV programs to deliver desirable results for its employees, which in turn would positively impact the business. This section will recount what design elements were found to be decisive in accomplishing employee-serving outcomes.

4.4.1 Employee Engagement in CSR

Interestingly, no other CV program goal had as many supporters as employee engagement in CSR. Most program managers were keen on getting as many employees involved as possible in their CV activities, and plenty of recommendations on how to do so were made.

The first way in which companies can engage their employees in CSR activities like CV is through adapting the design of the volunteering activity itself. For one, to lower the threshold of participating in CV, firms can organize **one-off activities**. Employees are more likely to commit to volunteering for a day than they are for longer periods of time.

> 'We have seen these past years that projects that require multiple contact moments are difficult for people to plan. We didn't get that many applications, but people really like projects that are one-off. A day.' (C12)

> 'There are always people that are enthusiastic, that want to go first, but they aren't the majority. The largest group has to get used to it, needs to be made enthusiastic, has to try it once.' (IM1)

Other than keeping in mind the duration of activities, companies are advised to consider their location. Specifically, activities that take place **locally** are favoured over others that require more travel time and effort to reach.

> 'You see when colleagues have to travel... I've done a project once, for example the language village. We did it at three locations in Amsterdam-West, in the Bijlmer at two schools, one at the train station here, and one you could bike to. It was really difficult to fill the Amsterdam-West ones, because people think: I have to take the train, switch. [...] We limit it to Southeast now. You can tell people register more easily.' (C12)

Two participants ascribe this to the fact that CV activities that are short and close by are *accessible*.

> 'As I said, it's very important that it's accessible. Because to be honest, if you look at my agenda, I generally don't have time for anything. Almost everyone that works here. You work long hours, that's reality. So, it has to be accessible as in close by and it shouldn't take too much time.' (C13, 1)

However, even activities that are close by and accessible may not take off when employees are not interested in the activity itself. As such, companies should design activities that are **attractive** to their staff.

> "You see, just like with this one activity last week, that people love it so much they already know they want to participate again next year." (C5, 1)

> 'I would like to have more activities because we are with quite a lot of people. There are a lot of people that never do anything. So, I have to see if we have to think of something differently that these people like to do.' (C13, 1)

In addition to have as feature attractiveness, companies are urged to make their activities **diverse**. This way, CV activities will not only appeal to particular individuals but be interesting for larger groups of employees.

> 'On the other hand, you need to have new things, such that you can also accommodate to people that are searching for something new, that don't want to do the same thing every year.' (C14)

Lastly, some suggestions were made with regards to the composition of CV activities. One party believed that activities performed in a *team* would activate the most employees, while another participant believed it to be *firm-wide* activities.

> 'I think the majority of our large numbers, those are due to the team activities. Then you frequently already have 15 people participate for an afternoon.' (C4)

> 'And it's good if we work on a specific initiative with all our branch locations a few times a year, that helps with getting support internally.' (C11)

The second design aspect that companies can rely on is that of support activities. Applicable to increasing employee engagement in CSR are communication and recruitment strategies. After all, in order for employees to decide to participate in CV, they should first be aware of the existence of these opportunities. Then, companies can push their employees in the right direction by supplementing communication with the active recruitment of corporate volunteers. To start with, several methods that firms may use for communicating their CV program to members of its organization prove useful. These include: online content, e-mail, events, print & TV and word-of-mouth. For one, firms should make sure information on their CV program is readily available on the web. Providing **online content**, such as newsletters and web articles makes for an easy read for its employees and can increase the CV program's recognition.

> 'We have a news app and we regularly post news on it. That's good, the brand awareness grows a bit.' (C3)

In addition, firms can create awareness for their CV program to increase employee engagement not only through online content but also by producing **print & TV**. Rather than finding information through the web, employees will come across it by navigating the hallways of their office building.

> ‘We have narrow casting, those are the screens you see everywhere with text on them. We run campaigns on those too. At the coffee machines, we now have for example the ‘Week of the Money’. So when you get yourself a coffee, you can’t ignore it. There’s a screen with colleagues: have you already applied, do you already have a school?’ (C12)

Nonetheless, some parties claim that while it is useful to have information readily available, employees should still be actively looking for this information in order to find it and as such it may not reach as wide an audience as desired.

> ‘Of course, we have the intranet but to see it, you need to be looking. The intranet is something like Google, you can’t find it if you don’t know it exists.’ (C4)

> ‘We send a lot of messages about it but some people don’t really read it or aren’t really familiar with the fact that it’s possible. Maybe not really interested, that that’s why they aren’t paying attention to it.’ (C13, 1)

As such, companies could adopt more proactive communication methods such as the sending of **e-mail**.

> ‘We send an e-mail or hang flyers. The e-mail has the best reach, I just send it to all employees in our organization. So, they get it.’ (C5, 2)

Another way to reach employees may be through the organization of internal **events**. These mainly include presentations, which allow employers to exhibit their CV program and provide details on its modus operandi.

> ‘Lately, we also set up a week. So between 7 and 9 in the morning while entering the office, employees were welcomed with an information letter and balloons in order to attract attention.’ (C1, paraphrased)

> ‘During such an on boarding week, which lasts four days while it used to be two weeks, they get a presentation. That it’s there, then someone from our team will tell what our organization does in the field of sustainability and CSR. They tell it. You always see that a lot of new employees submit an application after the on boarding.’ (C12)

Lastly, the communication method that was deemed the most effective in persuading employees to participate in CV was **word-of-mouth**. Employees were most susceptible to considering support for CV practices when their fellows shared their positive experiences about it.

> ‘The best publicity is the experience of somebody. So if somebody tells a personal story about what he has been through when had a high tea with homeless people, so the personal experience that you have had with such an activity, that’s the best way to attract other employees.’ (IM1)

Arguably, what matters most in deploying varying communication tactics is the resulting **internal visibility**. By making sure the CV program is seen throughout all layers of the company, employees are familiarized with its contents and will be more likely to be engaged.

> ‘We can tell that, especially because we are approachable, reachable, that that’s why we recruit people and get them to participate. That the engagement is higher because of it.’ (C9)

> ‘And communicate about it, that’s also very important. We noticed that ourselves. If you do that actively, then people know it’s there. They know how to find it, they’ll start thinking about.’ (C10)

However, firms should pay attention not only to the extent of communication but also its content. Two parties speak of the harm that *misconceptions* can do to employee engagement in CSR. Employees that are misinformed on the workings of their organization’s CV program may choose not to participate according to the knowledge they have of it. As one firm explains:

> ‘I think also getting rid of misconceptions. We know very well you can use your time and have 200 hours to spend, and that it counts towards your hour targets. We know all of that, but you still notice a lot of employees don’t know it or think it’s a very different story. We hear people think you can only do something for 8 hours each year while it’s 200 hours. So, there’s stories going around, and we don’t really know how they arise, if it’s assumptions, we don’t know. But I think a lot of people find it a very important aspect, it can often be the reason why people don’t participate or don’t start something themselves. So, I think that’s an important point, one that we have to tackle in our communications.’ (C6)

Other than ensuring communication surrounding CV programs is plentiful and reaches as many employees as possible, companies can increase employee engagement through the recruitment of volunteers. Rather than simply communicating what opportunities employees can make use of, recruitment entails the active approaching of people to have them fill corporate volunteer positions. Foremost, the recruitment tactic that was considered most compelling was the employment of **ambassadors**. While these could be both internal, such as employees that had already participated in CV, or external, like well-known spokespeople, what matters is that they are passionate about the CV program in place and share this narrative with others in the organization.

> ‘And we try to do community building, so to make sure we have ambassadors at different parts in the organization. They can spread the story and make people enthusiastic to participate too.’ (C2)

> ‘We have an ambassador network. We have had it actually since last March. Reason for that is that we, even though the applications keep coming, we want to maintain high growth. Employee turnover in our organization is quite high, I mean people that work here usually do so for a few years and then leave again. Each month, we have a lot of new people, so you need to constantly make sure the foundation is pushed out. For that, we have ambassadors, that make sure that happens.’ (C6)

Where drawing on others to help recruit volunteers is effective, two other parties suggest taking advantage of networks by *personally asking*.

> ‘And we’ve been working here for quite a long time, so we know people. So if we have a shortage in people, we just approach them: I haven’t seen you on the list. So, eventually, we manage to get the people.’ (C5, 2)

> ‘What I really like is that, because of my previous job as personal assistant of the board of directors, everybody knows me, and I know everyone. Or pretty much. So that makes for a quick exchange and I think it’s a very nice addition, that there’s a lower threshold for people to do an application.’ (C8)

Finally, companies striving for employee engagement should adjust the management of their CV program. First off, they should oversee where decision control is located. Some parties suggest decision control should be **top-down**, where higher management gets actively involved in the organization of its CV program. By setting the right example and committing to the success of its program, other layers of the organization will be inspired to take part.

> ‘And especially when companies are concerned that make a certain number of hours available, then it’s especially important to show that example. It’s easily said, you can do these many hours a month, but when you’re super busy as a lawyer and your boss doesn’t do it too, you won’t be doing it either. It sounds really nice, you get all these hours, but if nobody gives the right example and uses them, it’s going to be incredibly difficult to make it an established part of a company.’ (IM1)

> ‘What you can also see in volunteering is the 1% rule. So, 1% of your time, or two days. You often see that, they say: just spend it. But there isn’t an active offer, choices aren’t made. So actually, it isn’t used. Because when you tell an employee: use those two days. Who are the first to do that, they are people that already volunteer. They’ll say: nice.’ (IM3)

However, it is said that decision control should not be one-sided. Allowing employees to also have a say in the CV program, such that control is more **bottom-up**, creates a CV program that employees are willing to participate in.

> ‘And we can tell that the applications keep coming, that’s really nice. So, you can tell this works very well, and that’s because it doesn’t work so much when you purely say top-down: this is it and register if you like it. But it works very well bottom-up.’ (C6)

> ‘It increases engagement, if you place it more bottom-up. Then they have more space and are more in charge of what they do and how they design it.’ (C11)

With this in mind, companies should not only consider who has control but also to what extent they have control. In particular, the freedom of choice program management has may impact employee engagement in CSR. Companies have discretion over the importance they give to the CV program in place, and one way to regulate this is by allowing program coordinators to determine what is done. For one, by allowing program management to adapt the CV program to the wishes of its different sorts of employees, employees will feel more inclined to participate. This freedom of choice has been titled **take into account target groups**, and is described by participants as follows:

> ‘We can tell, that’s also dependent on the changing profile of our employees, that we have a lot of young employees that want to do something once. Their profile is different and matches less with the profile of our older employees and the process we designed for this program. For example, if we would do more maintenance work, we would inspire especially new employees and give them a softer landing and guide them step-by-step to more intensive projects.’ (C11)

> ‘You can do very ambitious things, but people won’t show up because they don’t have time for it. That’s reality. So, per target group, we are a target group with little time but a lot of means, you have to see what fits. We can partly finance but only be there if it fits our agenda.’ (C13, 1)

On the other hand, companies can allocate resources to program management in order to have them **give CV priority**. By showing the CV program in place is valued, firms demonstrate to their employees that they care for their charitable work and will likely increase their involvement. Some ways to administer this are accrediting hours for CV work done or promoting management support for CV initiatives.

> ‘Managerial support depends on how it goes. There are targets for productivity, if time is spent on doing volunteering work these go down. It’s difficult to get volunteers from teams that are under pressure, so recruiting volunteers is done in consultation.’ (C1, paraphrased)

> ‘It’s difficult, you can tell among our people. They have to work with customers, it’s difficult for them to make time free for it. They’re in a constant struggle between the business that goes first but we would also really like the foundation to be put on the map. So that’s always a challenge.’ (C6)

Finally, two other suggestions were made that were not supported by more than three interviewees but could prove important to take into consideration. For one, two interviewees address the potential reduction in employee engagement that having a *focus in line with business* may cause. As mentioned earlier, diversity in activities improves employee engagement; picking a specific theme for a CV program will limit the activities that are fitting and as such may reduce the number of employees interested in taking part.

> ‘I think the focus is strong but that means that not everyone agrees with it, has something with it. We’ve come up with it, that it should work like this. But it isn’t always the case. So, the employee engagement could be better.’ (C2)

> ‘It’s difficult sometimes, because there’s the logic to implement CSR initiatives that are linked to your overall mission. [...] But you have to be careful with radically crossing out things that are already existing within your organization, and initiatives that have already been taken. That can cause friction.’ (IM1)

The last suggestion made was the support that companies lend to employees for taking part in CV activities. Namely, providing *no support* is thought to have a negative effect on employee engagement. Two participants supported this:

> 'That's the difficult division of roles, that's actually maybe a discussion we should have with the HR department. Like: can a volunteer, our employees, also do work in the bosses' time?' (C3)

> 'We stopped with it because we simply didn't get any employees any more. I blamed it on the fact that it was in the weekend.' (C7)

Conversely, the supply of assistance in the form of *recognition* and *time support* were considered related to employee engagement, each supported by two interviewees.

> 'We also have activities like the day of the volunteer during which we put volunteers in the spotlight. Now and then, we organize an interview with a colleague on our intranet. We distribute chocolate letters each year to all our volunteers. That's really nice, some colleagues get a package and others think: 'Hey, I don't have anything, how's that possible?'. Then you get encouraged to something.' (C2)

> 'Those projects could be done during work time and team activities also during working hours. [...] Because we think if you say: you can do it on Saturdays, you get a lot less people.' (C14)

Overall, there are plenty ways for firms to improve their employee engagement in CSR. Yet, what seems to matter most is that CV programs are all-inclusive. On the one hand, this means that companies show their own involvement in CV programs by providing decision freedom to its coordinators and by supplying easily accessible communication and personal recruitment approaches. On the other hand, companies should listen to the preferences of their employees. This includes the organization of activities that are of short duration, attractive, and diverse but also the adoption of a bottom-up approach that allows corporate volunteers to have an active say in the design of CV programs. In the end, combining a company's will with its employees' wishes will make for the greatest employee engagement in CSR.

4.4.2 Employee Development

1. **Skill Acquisition**

The next employee-serving goal that companies targeted was that of skill acquisition. With few firms (3) in this study aiming to do so, results on the relationship with design elements were scant. In particular, only one single design element was found to be relevant by more than three interviewees. Still, this Section will discuss other comments that were made to provide grounds for further exploration.

The one design element found to be significant for employee development through skill acquisition was to make sure that CV activities were **different** from regular work activities. Having employees carry out new tasks in settings they are not familiar with inspires growth.

> ‘And what they can learn from it really well, is that they can lead a project themselves. Because that’s usually the case when working with clients, there’s the hierarchy and they are usually a bit lower. They do more of the operational tasks. So, what’s really nice about this is that they can practice what it’s like to lead something themselves.’ (C6)

> ‘For some employees, it requires a lot of getting used to. In the areas of skills and abilities, that’s soft too, but they learn. It can’t be compared with their job functions where they have a clear structure, clear way of working, clear briefing, are in charge. Actually, they work without guidance and briefing during CV activities. [...] It’s what we think is good for our employees, that they learn that.’ (C11)

According to two participants, one way of ensuring a different setting to spur growth is by locating volunteering activities *abroad*.

> ‘That’s also really nice, there are a lot of people that have never been outside of Europe and they’ll go to Sri Lanka. That’s fantastic to see, what kind of metamorphosis these people undergo.’ (C7)

> ‘We see the gaining of international experience as accelerator in someone’s development. We have some operating companies abroad but there aren’t many and they’re very small. Sometimes people go there too but that’s often for longer periods of time. [...] So, with an assignment you can fill that part too. Because it’s short, it’s very easy to arrange. So, definitely with MD, management development, we have the policy that it’s good for our potentials to get experience abroad. It brings a lot.’ (C10)

However, a topic that interviewees do not agree with is whether CV activities should make use of an employee’s professional skills or not. One the one hand, one participant argues that employees do not necessarily need their professional skills but can rather perform *hands-on volunteering* for skill development:

> ‘It stays with general skills, although they work without structure and too many instructions.’ (C11)

This argument is opposed by one other interviewee that believes employees learn the most when they are able call upon the same skills they use in the workplace: *skill-based volunteering*.

> ‘And of course because you use all your knowledge and skills. The more often you do something, the better it is for your own development. So when it comes to that, it doesn’t just give a nice feeling to make an impact on society, but it also really helps with the personal development of our employees.’ (C6)

Yet, whether drawing upon skills or not, one participant suggests that making activities *recurring* would not increase the learning curve that employees experience.

> ‘If you’re looking at the learning objective, what we do from the learning objective, you can ask yourself whether people will learn a lot of new things the next time.’ (C10)

The same participant recommends establishing *selection criteria* for the recruitment of corporate volunteers to ensure those that participate are actively pursuing development.

> 'Sometimes people are really interested in getting to know cultural diversity, to see if they can do something with their knowledge and experience in a completely different culture. Sometimes they want to learn to be more pragmatic. [...] It can be very different. We are fine with anything, as long as they have thought about it and really want something with it.' (C10)

To strengthen the learning experience, it is also suggested to ask *feedback from employees* to have them reflect on what has been learned and how this can be applied in their regular jobs.

> 'About a week or six after they come back, we do a trio conversation, so we do it together with the manager. We also do it before they leave but also afterwards. We discuss: what have you learned, was it like you expected it to be, have you learned other things. Often that's the case. And how will you continue with it, here.' (C10)

Another interviewee uses this feedback for *impact measurement* purposes. Gauging the impact that CV projects had on an employee's development could help companies gain insight into whether what they had in mind was accomplished.

> 'We do three measurements. That's important for us, what it did with the people. After a year, that's what I find very important. That trip, at the time, that had such an impact on you, does it still impact your life.' (C7)

In whichever way a firm approaches conclusion of its CV projects, two interviewees propose that it should ensure proper *preparation* for corporate volunteers. This is to ascertain they have the bare necessities to carry out the activity as intended and can focus on their development instead.

> 'We give them a short training in advance, half a day. It's about intercultural sensitivity, then they'll also practice certain situations. That often yields a lot of insights.' (C10)

> 'They'll be briefed but it's more a framework briefing, and they have to see themselves, feel and react on the situation they are residing in.' (C11)

The last design elements a company has at its disposal to kindle employee development is that of program management. Four elements have been introduced, each being supported by only one interviewee. The first one relates to the freedom of choice that employees have. According to one respondent, employees learn the most when they get *full freedom of choice* in choosing activities as they will go all out for projects they are passionate about.

> 'Also, a bit with the idea, you learn something from volunteering work and you do it best when you can choose something yourself that you love, because you really like it yourself. So that's where it comes from, it's really an employee-driven foundation.' (C4)

CV program coordinators that may not wish to give up control should still *take into account target groups* when composing CV programs. As commented on by one participant, young people are keener on starting something themselves and as such should get space to do so in the CV program.

> 'Because you can tell a lot of young people, they want to do this too. They want to start something themselves. And what they can learn from it really well, is that they can lead a project themselves.' (C6)

Then, *managerial support* can play an important role in employee development. Without approval by management, employees are unable to participate in volunteering programs and as such miss the opportunity for development.

> 'And managers usually think it's only great when employees sign up as financial volunteer. In light of personal development, it's really good.' (C9)

At last, taking on a *focus in line with business* will boost skill acquisition. As discussed earlier, this will help companies gain insights into customers; however, this knowledge is embedded in the mind of its employees and as such the same mechanism will enhance learning.

> 'I'm not giving up, so I'm speaking with Dutch health insurers. We have a care provider, a youth provider that owns foster homes but also provides guidance at home to children that have problems. They're all professionals. We said: wouldn't it be nice if you have your people do something as a volunteer. Because you learn a lot as professional, a lot of professionals think they can't let go of things. While if you've been a volunteer for a while, you see the importance of a volunteer.' (NPO3)

Altogether, the companies in this study have yet to discover the potential that CV programs can have for employee skill development. However, before they are able to do so, the topic of designing a CV program to be the optimal training ground for employees needs further exploration. Participants conclude that as long as CV activities are substantially different from employees' everyday jobs, some degree of positive change should be obtained. They hinted towards several other promising techniques in maximizing employee skill acquisition, including performing activities abroad, selecting employees based on their willingness to learn, asking feedback from employees, measuring the impact of CV on employee development, and providing preparation materials. Other recommendations were giving employees full freedom in picking CV projects, adapting CV programs to different employees' interests, having managers support corporate volunteers, and aligning the program's focus with that of the business. Nonetheless, this myriad of ideas calls for deeper examination.

2. **Community Learning**

The last CV program goal as encountered in this study was that of community learning. In order to better understand what is happening in other layers of society, this research has found the design of the volunteering activity itself to be of great importance. Mainly, projects that take place nearby the office and allow corporate volunteers to get in contact with people enhance community learning the most. Participants believe that engaging with communities in the vicinity of employees' work and living space is the most effective in developing an understanding of what is taking place in the community.

> 'How the intermediary we work with, you can also look on the website, but they focus on volunteering work in the region. [...] I think it's a really nice idea that it's local, it makes the effort a little less too sometimes. Then it's around the corner, you can just go there. By focusing on businesses, you step outside of your bubble and you keep being involved in what else is playing in society.' (C13, 1)

> 'We try to recruit people to do something for others in the city. Preferably around the corner, because then you're really active in the neighbourhood.' (IM1)

However, one respondent admits this is in part done because these activities are more *accessible* and hence more practical.

> 'So also in Amsterdam, we're not going to look in Maastricht: would you like to come to Artis? Because the departments have to arrange their own transport and finance that themselves. And it's also for convenience and local visibility and involvement, they like it. We're from Amsterdam, you're from Amsterdam. You already bond.' (IM1)

At the same time, learning about the community is typically done through the people that form it; being in direct contact with beneficiaries through volunteering activities—doing **social work**—allows employees to first-hand experience their perspective on living.

> 'For us, if we're looking at financial self-reliance, it's very self-evident for a lot of people that work in our organization. But if they then, even if it's just teaching at a school in a disadvantaged neighbourhood, that can be quite shocking. You suddenly appreciate a lot where you were born and how your own family situation is like. It opens your eyes, that it can be very different.' (C9)

> 'We prefer to pair people together, so that people also meet others they normally wouldn't or would almost never meet. In that way, to grant both sides a beautiful meeting. That's often what happens, that's really nice, and for both sides inspiring.' (IM1)

Finally, companies willing to bring their employees closer to the community are able to do so with having a *focus not in line with business*. As commented on by one interviewee, community learning has less to do with the business and more with society as a whole.

> ‘Other companies choose a wider range, to have their people make an impact on society and to give them a much broader view of what’s happening in society, who else lives in it, and what they can do for them. That has nothing to do with the company but a lot more with the people and giving them a broader view of the world, and to inspire them.’ (IM1)

To sum up, this study has uncovered that promoting community learning calls for few CV program tweaks. The design elements necessary for improving employee understanding of society as a whole are local activities and social work; activities where employees are in the neighbourhood and in close contact with beneficiaries. Although not supported by more than three interviewees, making CV accessible and having a focus not in line with business are two other approaches proposed in this research.

4.4.3 Overview of Employee-serving Goals and Design

Bearing in mind the significant role of its staff, the last perspective on maximizing the benefits of CV programs is that of focusing on employee-serving goals. In the first place, companies believe that the engagement of their employees in CSR initiatives such as CV should be pursued. Ultimately, the success of CV relies on the extent to which it can be carried out, which in turn depends on employees taking part. With the importance placed on their participation, fortunately companies have a wide range of design alternatives at their disposal. For one, engaging large numbers of employees calls for a simultaneous top-down and bottom-up approach. While higher management should set the right example by showing its own involvement in CV, it should beware of overexerting control and instead give freedom to its employees in choosing a CV program they wish to be part of. This asks program management to take into account the preferences of different groups of individuals when designing the program but also to ensure its charitable giving has an actual place in the organization. Even though firms can support their employees by allowing time off for CV activities, they are unlikely to use these hours when their work environment is discouraging them to do so. Firms can lessen this conflict between volunteerism and business by scaling down the intensity of volunteering projects, such as by reducing the duration to one-off and arranging for them to take place locally. Making volunteering attractive and diverse will further persuade employees to participate; however, proper communication plays a vital role in increasing engagement. Companies must raise awareness among their employees on the opportunities surrounding CV, which can be done by making it internally visible. Effective communication methods include the publishing of information through print, TV, and online content, as well as newsletters sent through e-mail and the organization of events. Yet, the most powerful means of engaging employees is through others: hearing the positive experience of colleagues triggers most to follow suit. Companies can encourage word-of-mouth

by establishing ambassador networks, where enthusiastic individuals within the organization spread the word. Meanwhile, firms may also wish to stimulate dialogue with others instead of among staff. The goal of achieving community learning can be accomplished by supporting local, social work initiatives. Employees learn the most about societal issues when they are in their neighbourhood and in close contact with beneficiaries. Then again, community learning is not the only way in which employees are able to develop through CV. Companies willing to realize skill acquisition have to pay attention to one feature in particular. The creation of a volunteering activity that is simply different from what employees would normally encounter in the workplace is the spark to growth. Figure 4.5 exhibits the relationship between CV program design and employee-serving CV program goals.

CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM DESIGN			CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM GOALS		
				Employee Development	
			Employee Engagement in CSR	Skill Acquisition	Community Learning
Program Management	Focus		In line with business (-)	In line with business	None/not in line with business
	Organizational Structure	Coordination			
		Decision Control	Bottom-up* Top-down*		
		Place			
	Policy	Freedom of Choice Employees		Full	
		Freedom of Choice Organization	Take into account target group* Give CV priority*	Take into account target group	
	Support		Yes No (-)	Yes	
Partnerships with NPOs	Collaboration	Length			
		Origin			
		Responsibility			
	Selection Partner	Type			
		Criteria			
	Use of Intermediaries				
Corporate Volunteering Activity	Composition		Team Firm-wide		
	Duration		One-off*	Recurring (-)	
	Features		Accessible Attractive* Diverse*	Different*	Accessible
	Location		Local*	Abroad	Local*
	Type			Hands-on volunteering Skill-based volunteering	Social work*
Support Activities	Communication	Method	E-mail* Events* Online content* Print & TV* Word-of-mouth*		
		Visibility	Internal* Misconceptions (-)		
	Performance Evaluation	Feedback		From employees	
		Measurement		Impact measurement	
	Recruitment	Method	Ambassadors* Personally asking		
		Selection		Criteria Preparation	

Figure 4.5: Overview of the relationship between employee-serving goals and the design elements of corporate volunteering programs

Source: This study

4.5 Designing Effective CV Programs: A Perspective Trade-Off

As shown in Sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4, one way to look at the design-goals relationship of CV programs is to understand what design elements contribute to the achievement of individual goals. However, considering that most companies will aim to pursue multiple goals simultaneously, another way to determine what CV program is most effective is by considering the trade-off that takes places between the different perspectives. After all, the adjustment of CV program design elements will switch a firm's focus and improve the achievement of certain goals while decreasing the probability of obtaining others. For example, prolonging the duration of CV activities from one-off to a series will allow a firm to enhance its community impact, yet surpasses its capability to accomplish community involvement and community learning and decreases its ability to achieve employee engagement in CSR. In order to provide companies a practical means of looking at effectively designing CV programs, the following Figures will show what particular design elements have the largest impact on the goals it is able to achieve.

4.5.1 Program Management

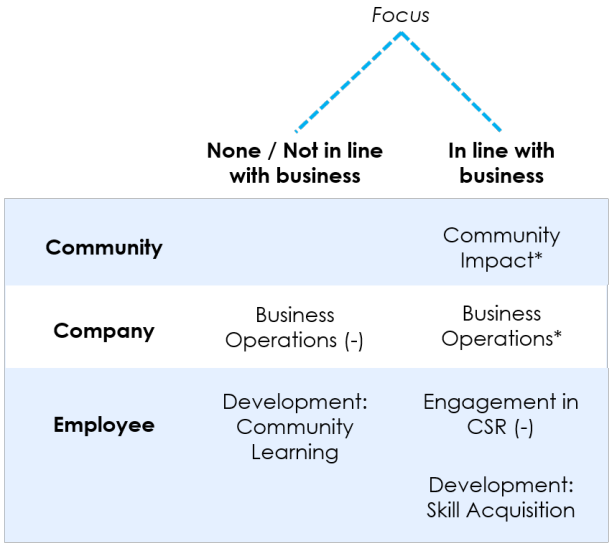


Figure 4.6: The trade-off between goals for the focus of the CV program
Source: This study

4.5.2 Partnerships with NPOs

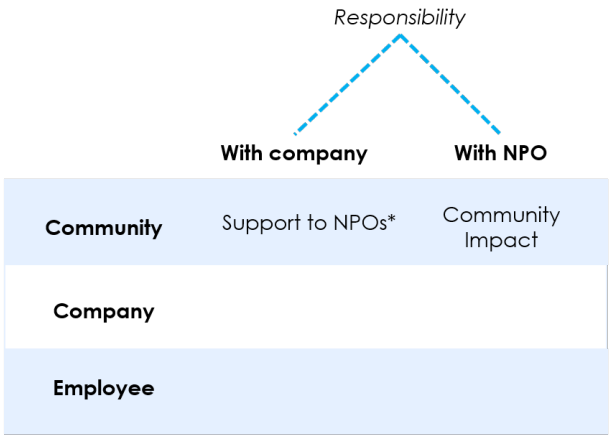
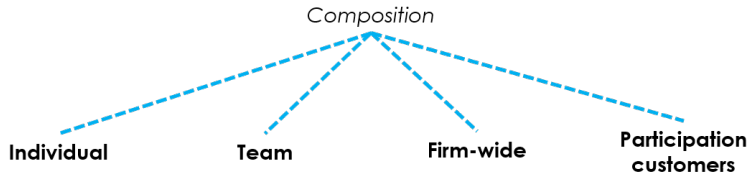


Figure 4.7: The trade-off between goals for the division of responsibility
Source: This study

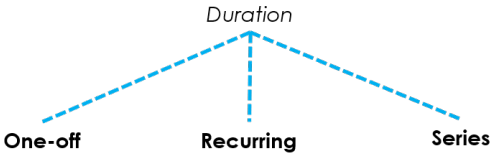
Figure 4.8: The trade-off between goals for the use of intermediaries
Source: This study

4.5.3 Volunteering Activity



Community	Community Impact			
Company		Team Building*	Team Building*	Business Operations
Employee		Engagement in CSR	Engagement in CSR	

Figure 4.9: The trade-off between goals for the composition of the volunteering activity
Source: This study



Community	Community Involvement	Support to NPOs*	Community Impact*
Company		Business Operations	
Employee	Engagement in CSR* Development: Community Learning	Development: Skill Acquisition (-)	

Figure 4.10: The trade-off between goals for the duration of the volunteering activity
Source: This study

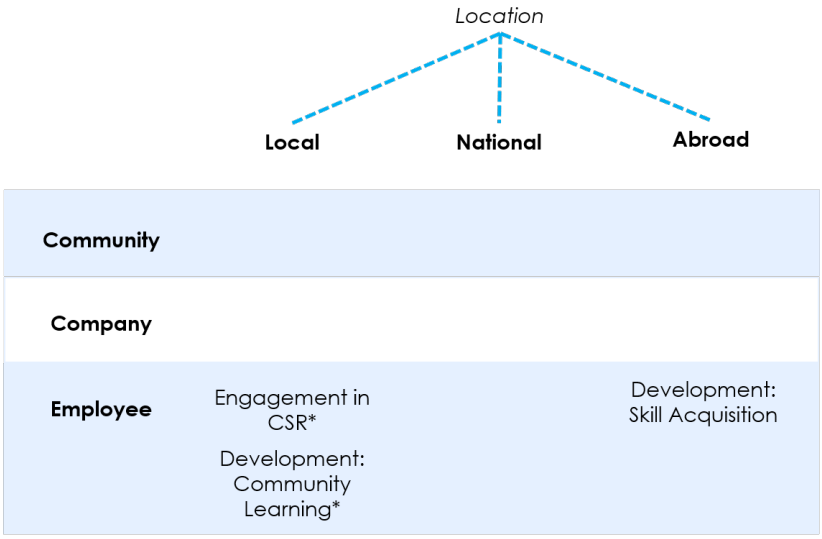


Figure 4.11: The trade-off between goals for the location of the volunteering activity
Source: This study

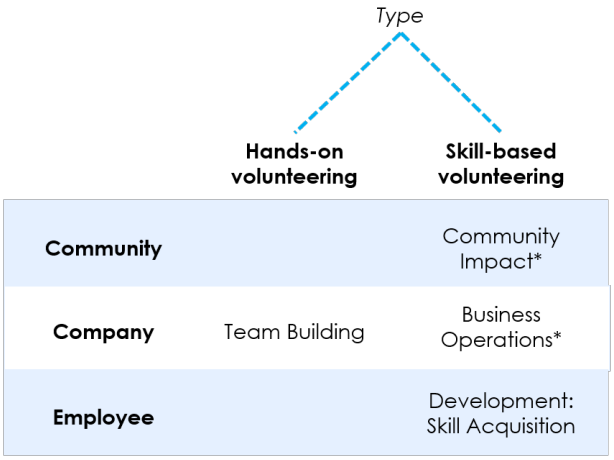


Figure 4.12: The trade-off between goals for the type of the volunteering activity
Source: This study

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Discussion

5.1 Conclusion

As much as companies have been doing to create CV programs that not just contribute to society but also generate valuable business outcomes, few have been strategic about their initiatives—and even those who have, have been largely unable to grasp the rationale behind making them succeed. For this reason, this study set out to shed light on how CV program design relates to CV program goals, thereby answering the main question: 'How can companies design effective corporate volunteering programs?'

To begin with, companies were found to have three types of goals in mind when establishing CV programs (SQ1). For one, with CV being a community involvement initiative, they aimed to contribute to society in one way or another. Social goals vary from simply being involved in order to fulfil CSR expectations, to lending basic support to non-profits, and making a meaningful impact not only on NPOs but society as a whole. Yet, regardless of how much a company wishes to do for others, this study has found many firms simultaneously strive for personal benefits. Business goals can be directed both towards the organization as well as the individuals in it. The company-serving goals that were identified in this study were that of company reputation, team building, and business operations. At the same time, evidence suggests that these can be complemented with employee-serving goals; employee benefits are likely to transfer to the organization as a whole. As such, companies revealed to pursue employee engagement in CSR and employee development through CV endeavours. With a wide variety of goals to choose from, this study has confirmed the thought that companies form CV programs not exclusively for others nor themselves. Instead, companies strive for synergy between social and business interests, seeking for a win-win-win situation.

In their pursuit for the desired results of CV, companies varied widely in their approach. The present research has uncovered four elements central to CV program design (SQ2). The

first design element is that of program management, which constitutes decisions such as what policies to adhere to, whether or not to focus the program on certain initiatives, the extent to which support should be lent to employees, and finally the structure through which all of this will be governed. The second large decision that companies need to take when designing CV programs concerns its partnerships with NPOs. In particular, it has to choose how to select its partners, what its collaboration with these partners will look like, and whether it wishes to make use of intermediaries. Then, the third design dilemma it is posed with is how the volunteering activity itself should look like. This concerns issues such as whether employees will participate alone or in groups, how long the activity should last, where it will take place, if it should have certain features, and whether it prefers particular types of volunteerism. The last design element that companies have at their disposal is that of support activities. A firm has to determine how it will handle communication surrounding the CV program, what recruitment methods it will employ, and how it will evaluate the performance of its activities. All in all, companies are faced with a challenge: among this myriad of choices, which alternatives are most worthwhile pursuing?

In order to guide companies in their search for CV programs that are the most effective for them, this research has aimed to uncover the relationship between CV program design and CV program goals. Resolving SQ3 and thereby the main question, a wide range of design elements has been found to help firms achieve specific CV program goals. Companies orienting their CV programs towards the community should pay close attention to their needs. The use of professional skills and knowledge is particularly valuable for non-profits, especially so when companies commit them for the longer term. However, firms should beware of burdening non-profits in the process, and therefore take on the bulk of organizational work. By targeting their program towards a specific objective and keeping track of its progress, companies are able to contribute the most. On the contrary, companies striving for personal benefits have little to gain from the design of firm-NPO collaborations. Instead, firms aiming for reputational gains should focus on establishing legitimacy through external communications, while those aspiring enhanced business operations should align the program with its company mission. Value chain improvements can also be brought about by obtaining valuable know-how through skill-based volunteering. The last organizational outcome, team building, can be actualized by focusing on activities performed in teams—whether with the department or colleagues from other parts of the organization. At the same time, the company can benefit by pursuing individual-level goals. The vital part that employees play in CV can be achieved through their engagement in CSR, which is increased by creating a positive climate surrounding the program. This includes organizing easily accessible and attractive volunteering activities, allowing employees to have a say in CV programs, and ensuring proper communication. Firms that wish for employee development

should design CV activities that bring them in close contact with the community and are different from regular work. In the end, the convergence between the social realm and business domain is why CV continues to be relevant: as a bridge between worlds.

5.2 Discussion

While a better understanding of how CV program design and goals relate can be seen as an important first step towards understanding how companies can improve their effectiveness in achieving both social and business goals through the use of CV, several questions have emerged in the process.

Firstly, with many firms aiming to maximize employee participation, this paper questions to what extent employee engagement is beneficial. As noted in Section 4.1, the goal that was supported most frequently by participants was that of employee engagement in CSR. This study acknowledges the vital role that employees play in CV. Following van Schie *et al.*'s notion (2011) that there is "no corporate volunteering without volunteers", firm's pursuit in engaging large numbers of employees makes sense. It can best be understood from a business point of view, as individual benefits such as employee development are based on employee participation. However, the advantages of large-scale volunteerism to the community should be disputed. As remarked by one participant:

> 'We notice that projects aren't necessarily served by having 50 people show up, at least not with our projects.' (C2)

On the one hand, a harmful consequence of performing CV with as many employees as possible is the weight they put on non-profits. Larger activities not only require additional expenses but also extra time and energy from non-profit staff in organizing and coordinating (Roza *et al.*, 2017; Samuel, Wolf, & Schilling, 2013). Even firms that attempt to cover these costs may still hinder NPOs in other ways, as described by one interviewee:

> 'Let me give you the example of this one firm, if you have an institution where 150 pretty heavily, mentally disabled people live and you go there and make a mess out of it. Those nurses will suffer from it for weeks.' (IM3)

On the other hand, the episodic nature of volunteering that is advocated in this research for increasing employee engagement in CSR is particularly worrisome for non-profits. As observed by Benjamin (2001, p. 73): 'The majority of corporations organize episodic volunteer activities that require large groups of volunteers; a way of organizing volunteerism that is convenient for many employers, although it is suitable to only a limited range of nonprofits or community needs'. One-off activities, such as "days of service" where large numbers of employees can be put to use, have been criticized for their inability to deliver real results (Handy & Brudney, 2007). Some scholars have already warned for the negative effects of short-lived volunteering initiatives and instead advocated the need for longer-term thinking (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013; Grant, 2012). This proposition that has also found support in this study:

> ‘A one-off, it’s possible, but that doesn’t really make sense. It gives a good feeling but that quickly fades away.’ (IM1)

While companies should still aim for engaging their employees in order to ensure continuity of their CV program, they should be wary of whether the quantity of its volunteering should be prioritized over its quality. With this in mind, this study proposes that employee engagement in CSR should not be seen as goal in itself but rather as a means to other ends.

At the same time, the finding that one party is harmed in the process of benefiting others shakes up the well-established notion that CV should be a “win-win-win” situation. Endorsed by many scholars (Brown & Ashcraft, 2005; Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013; de Gilder *et al.*, 2005; Peterson, 2004), this study has likewise found approval for the belief that CV is mutually beneficial with more than half of all interviewees providing confirmation. Nevertheless, it has also found support for the concern voiced by its opposition. As much as CV is hoped to benefit everyone, the business case seems to dominate (Roza *et al.*, 2017). According to Samuel *et al.* (2013), ‘A win-win-win situation as suggested by several authors appears to be an aspired state rather than an achieved reality’ (p. 14). In particular, in their pursuit for valuable business results, firm seem to overlook whether their benevolent deeds are actually dignified. The involvement of companies in the community has already received its fair share of criticism, where the interest of the non-profit has been said to be put second to that of the firm and its employees (Benjamin, 2001; Tschirhart & St Clair, 2005). Especially striking has been the discovery of one firm (C4) in this study’s sample that explicitly stated *not* to strive for community benefits. This gives rise to the question: how appropriate is corporate involvement in the community when the community’s interest is taken out of the equation?

As much as this study has tried to uphold the valuable role of corporate volunteers in both business and society, it recognizes that it is a potential that many firms have yet to reach. In challenging the status quo, this research may therefore provide guidance to companies that wish to understand how their choices affect its impact on different stakeholders. However, in order to do so, it believes firms must modify their belief that CV can benefit all parties—at least early on. Instead, it supposes a trade-off between perspectives exists for the design of CV programs. While multiple goals can be achieved simultaneously, one perspective is always thought to be dominant to others. As is often thought to be the case, firms pursuing business goals when employing CV are likely to discount those of the NPO in its tracks (Tschirhart & St Clair, 2005), while it can also be said that companies prioritizing community needs are unable to also obtain the complete spectrum of business benefits. The trade-off between social and business goals has previously been pointed out by Lee (2011): ‘As businesses move to position

corporate volunteering as a mechanism to support specific business objectives, managers (and business leaders) need to decide how much the business value of the programme has priority over its worth to non-profits receiving volunteers and the wishes of employees' (p. 178). While business and social goals are thought to be able to coexist, the simultaneous attainment of significant community, company, *and* employee results is believed to be improbable. Instead, the perspectives are visualized in Figure 5.1, where, at least with the current state of affairs, no unison is possible but rather companies have to settle for one or the other.

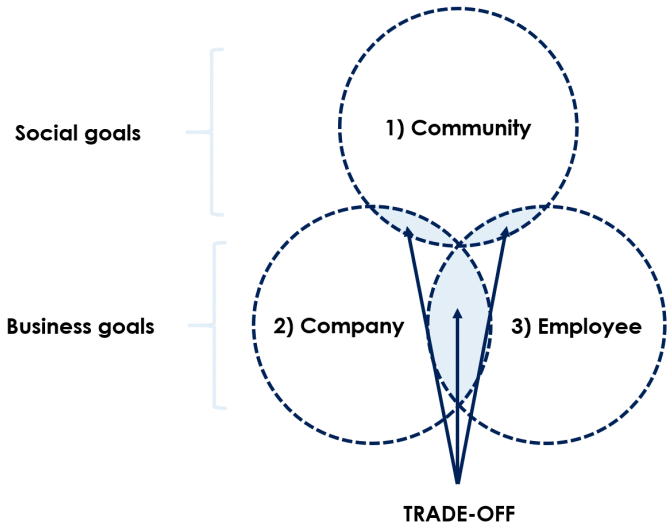


Figure 5.1: The trade-off between business and social goals in designing CV programs
Source: This study

Understanding that CV may not be as infallible as seemed to believe, the decision on whether a company should establish a CV program is no longer straightforward. If companies are unable to design CV programs that have a positive effect on society, then why should they be involved in the community in the first place? The argument that CSR initiatives by firms are more or less required at present-day (see Section 2.1) remains valid. Yet, the superiority of active involvement over traditional philanthropy could turn out to be misleading with the win-win-win state of CV yet to be demonstrated. Van der Voort *et al.* (2009) already cautioned for the double-edged sword that CV may be for its participants, while Tschirhart (2005) also debated the usefulness of merging business and society: 'Corporate answers to social problems may be

based on economic efficiency approaches that do not adequately address the complexity of the problems' (p. 22). Participants in this study also called attention to the difficulties in working with the non-profit domain:

> 'But what you can tell is that you're working with volunteering organizations or social organizations. They're different in doing business than commercial organizations. ... It's another type of organization you're working with. That's difficult sometimes.' (C9)

If non-profit organizations are indeed better suited for solving societal issues, then why should companies interfere? According to Bulter and McChesney (1998), from a transaction cost perspective, it only makes sense for corporations to take on this task when they can make more profitable use of resources than others can. While firms surely have more capital at their disposal than many non-profit organizations do, its "profitable use" could be challenged. As noted by Roza *et al.* (2017), the suitability of corporate volunteers for delivering certain services may not be evident; while training can ensure employees are fully capable of volunteering, parties may not be willing to cover the costs relating to it (Alfes *et al.*, 2017). Even though its benefits may be appealing, this study comes to the conclusion that CV is an investment that not all firms should be willing to make. Instead, firms should be strategic about their initiatives and carefully consider the advantages and disadvantages of their involvement *before* they choose to take part. Unless companies are willing and able to commit the necessary resources to their programs, it may be better to refrain from making promises it cannot keep. One participant in this study has already put this into practice:

> 'That was the only thing that was difficult, freeing time to organize it. We have put it on the back burner because some people have left, departments shrink.' (C14)

For those companies that have made sufficient investments but are not seeing the positive results of their actions yet, it is recommended to pause and reflect. The results of this study can be helpful in determining what elements of its CV program can be adjusted to bring about the greatest improvement.

Although a plethora of suggestions have been made on how CV program goals can be achieved in Section 4, there is one more observation warranting attention. In particular, companies should keep an eye out for new types of volunteering. This study has charted the as-is situation of CV, exploring the relationships between design and goals as they are currently manifested. However, the landscape of volunteerism is continuously changing, with the role of new generations increasing rapidly. Millennials, born in the 1980s and 1990s, have officially surpassed other generations, now making up the largest part of the workforce in the United States and expecting to do the same in other countries (Financial Times, 2018). What is more,

they have been leading in pressing for corporations to act socially responsible, and are more likely to volunteer (McGlone, Spain, & McGlone, 2011). Correspondingly, several interviewees have recognized the promising role that this generation may play in future CV initiatives:

> 'And what I really see, my colleagues within the foundation, you also see young people. We have a traineeship in our organization, those are all people under 35. And that's a round table kind of thing, and they organize a lot of things. But that people are really searching, or young people are looking for deepening and reflection and meaning something for someone else. So we have a lot of new young people, that makes it incredibly nice.' (C3)

> 'Those are people from 20 to 35, that's the group we're looking for. They have busy agendas, they don't want to commit to having to go somewhere every Tuesday afternoon, but they're occupied with what impact they can make in this world, if they can mean something for someone else, and how they can shape that.' (IM1)

However, participants have noted that this shift has called for more contemporary forms of volunteering:

> 'Trendier volunteering, actually. Or things you can do from home. It's a target group, people with small children also want to do something but it's hard for them to leave the house. What can you do online? You used to have the childline, nowadays you have some things online too. Those kinds of possibilities, we're trying to see what is out there and if it's possible to get people interested in them.' (C4)

The ways in which the workplace should be adapted in order to effectively engage generation Y has already received attention from scholars and practitioners. In particular, millennials are found to desire work environments that are achievement-focused, provide regular feedback, the use of technology, and flexibility in work time and location–elements that could also apply to volunteering activities (Alsop, 2008). Still, as relevant the role of newer generations may be, fact remains that other groups still make up a large part of the workforce (Financial Times, 2018). As such, firms should account for a wider range of target groups, tailoring CV programs to their individual wants and needs (Bhattacharya *et al.*, 2008). As explained by Roza *et al.* (2015), 'Benefits of corporate involvement in volunteering do not arise for all employees in a similar fashion' (p. 6). The same could be said about accounting for characteristics such as age, gender, nationality, and job position in rolling out CV opportunities, as each of these have been shown to have an effect on volunteerism (Breitsohl & Ehrig, 2017; Peterson, 2004). While a company's search for the design of an effective CV program can as such be considered dependent on the profile of its employees, it is still on its own in figuring out what this means for their organization.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

While this research has done a first attempt at closing the gap between the design of CV programs and the achievement of its goals, it is subject to some limitations. For one, this study has taken on the perspective of goals instead of that of costs and benefits. It has done so as CV programs are urged to be approached strategically by setting goals in order to reach desired results (Boccalandro, 2009; Points of Light Foundation, 2005). However, by focusing only on the positive outcomes that participants in CV are striving for, it has disregarded its potential negative effects. Even though it has touched upon some of the costs of CV in Section 2.3 and Section 5.2, it has been unable to determine whether certain CV program design elements are also causing harm. With the link between CV program design and costs still unknown, companies taking up on the results of this study should be aware of possible unwanted side effects. Further studies on the design of effective CV program could shed light on what potential disadvantages are and how they arise. This could be done by extending the interview guide as used in this study to include additional questions on the costs of CV and how these relate to specific design elements.

Second, this research has sought for effective CV programs from the company perspective, thereby not paying attention to other angles. Specifically, the perspectives of the non-profit organization and beneficiaries have been underplayed in CV literature and require attention (Roza *et al.*, 2017). While this study has included the NPO in its sample, it has not inquired on the ultimate effects of CV program design on those in need. Even though non-profits are considered the gateway for (corporate) volunteers to reach the community (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013), their inclination to follow company's wants can call in question to what extent they are actually able to serve beneficiaries through CV efforts (Tschirhart & St Clair, 2005). For this reason, additional research should not only consider what NPOs believe is best for their clients but rather investigate what clients themselves think. This information can be obtained by replicating this study and including beneficiaries in this sample, or probably more efficiently by conducting a survey among the recipients of CV.

In a similar fashion, the management of CV programs has been chosen to represent companies' view on successful CV programs. However, it can be argued that asking those in charge of CV programs on their success will only deliver socially desirable answers. Even though this study has included intermediaries and non-profits in order to mitigate this bias, it is still deemed necessary to explore the opinion of others in the organization on how CV programs could be improved. The perspective of corporate volunteers seems particularly fruitful. After all, volunteers themselves know best what their wants and needs are and can therefore

also decipher how companies can target different groups. Additional studies could retrieve this information by organizing focus groups or conducting surveys among types of employees varying in for instance age, gender, nationality, and job position.

At last, with the context of this research being the Netherlands, the generalizability of its results is debatable. The translation inherent to this cross-language study could have influenced the researcher's ability to interpret gathered data accurately and consequently have impacted the quality of its results. At the same time, while cases have been selected for their multinational background, the Netherlands has a distinct volunteering environment and as such may not be comparable to other countries (Hoolwerf & Schuyt, 2017). Accordingly, this study should be replicated in other countries in order to understand whether its conclusions are context-specific or apply to broader the field of CV. On the other hand, the line of research done in the Netherlands could be continued by empirically testing the results of this study. This way, the multitude of CV program design elements found to be significant can be reduced to a handful that has the most impact on CV program outcomes. In turn, this will allow companies to maximize the gains of their investment in effective CV programs.

5.4 Theoretical and Practical Implications

Even though some subjects that require additional attention have emerged, this study has been able to contribute to the field of CV in two ways. On the one hand, this study has added to the body of literature on the topic of CV. For one, it has shed light on the status of CV programs in the Netherlands, a situation that has received relatively little attention in literature so far. By doing so, it has increased knowledge on how Dutch companies engage in the community as well as what avenues may prove promising for further research. Moreover, this study has been able to respond to the need for strategic thinking on community initiatives. By being one of the first in studying the link between CV program design and CV program outcomes, it has enhanced knowledge on how success in CV can be accomplished.

On the other hand, this research can be seen as particularly valuable to practitioners. It has given CV program managers a practical handbook for designing more effective CV programs, showing both design elements contributing to desired results as well as the trade-off taking place between varying CV program goals. This way, companies are able to advance their programs from arbitrary to purposeful, improving their ability to generate positive results for everyone involved. At the same time, by engaging into individual conversations with those involved CV, it has stimulated different parties to reflect on their current actions and desired state of CV. By nudging participants to think about whether their CV programs are actually effective, this

study has hoped to inspire companies, intermediaries, and non-profit organizations to continue developing their CV efforts until the win-win-win situation is actually achieved.

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Appendices

A Design Elements

Those choices that are mutually exclusive, *i.e.* only one of the two can be selected, are designated with text in **bold**, while those decisions that can co-exist are visualized with text in *italics*.

Program Management

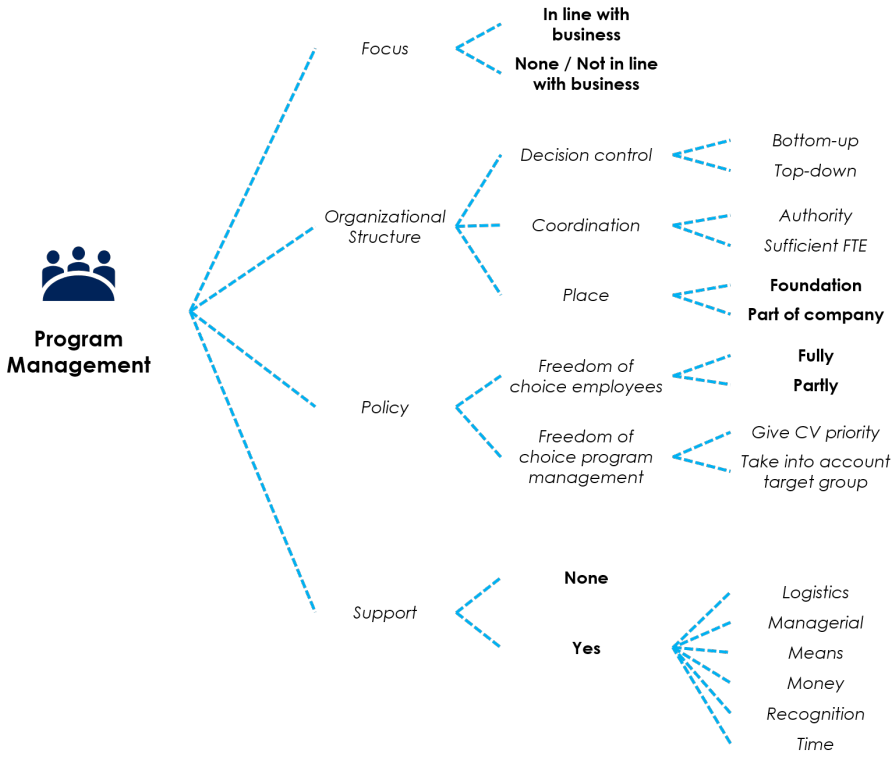

Figure 5.2: Overview of design choices related to program management
Source: This study

Partnerships with NPOs

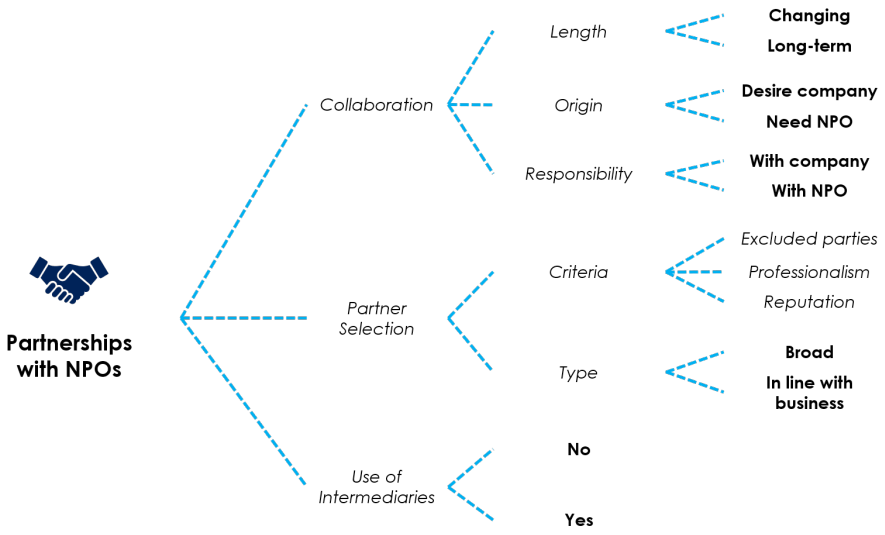

Figure 5.3: Overview of design choices related to partnerships with NPOs

Source: This study

Volunteering Activity

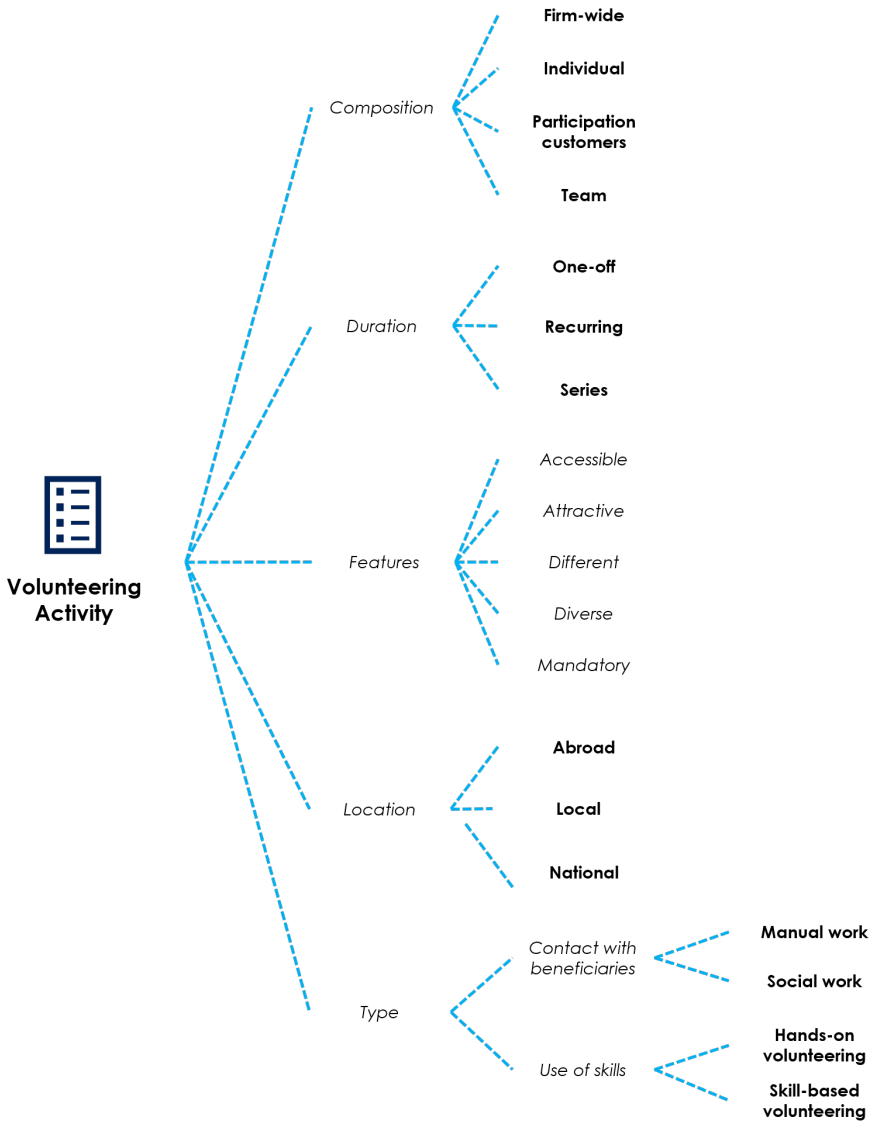

Figure 5.4: Overview of design choices related to the volunteering activity

Source: This study

Support Activities

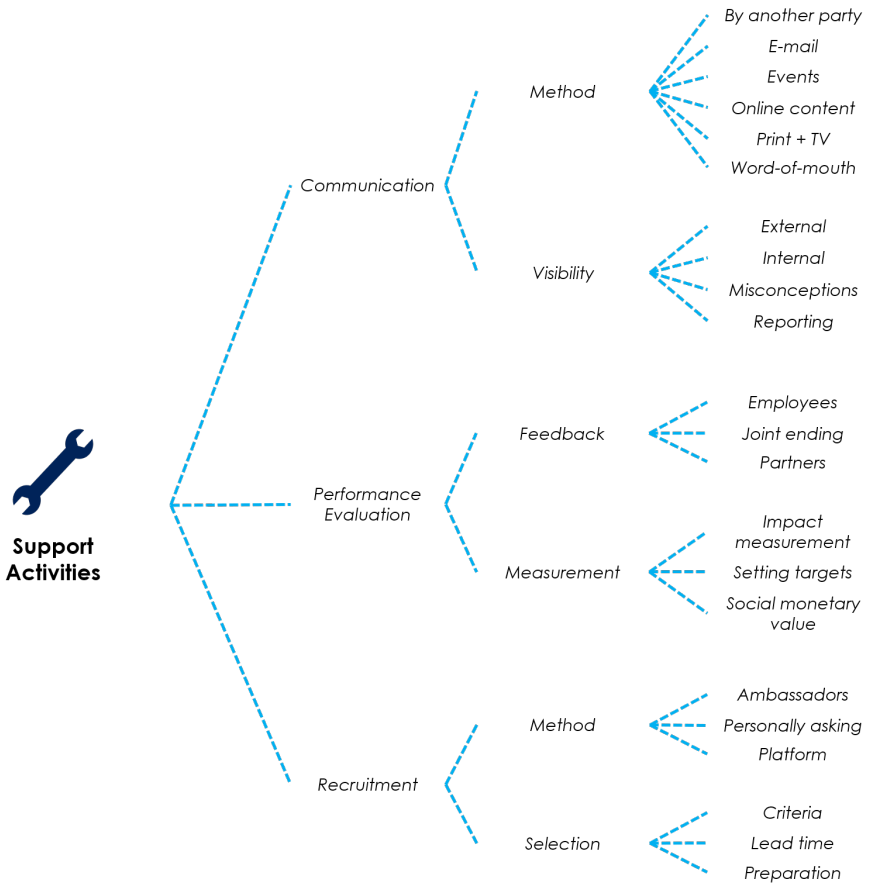

Figure 5.5: Overview of design choices related to support activities

Source: This study

B Introductory Letter

Aan: [e-mail contactpersoon]

Van: 485454sr@student.eur.nl

Onderwerp: Interviewverzoek: masterscriptie over vrijwilligerswerk via werkgevers

Beste **[naam contactpersoon]**,

Mijn naam is Stella Robeer, master student aan de Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus Universiteit. Voor mijn scriptie doe ik onderzoek naar 'corporate volunteering': werknemers die via hun werkgever vrijwilligerswerk doen. Gezien de jarenlange ervaring die **[naam organisatie]** hier mee heeft, zou ik u graag in een persoonlijk gesprek een aantal vragen willen stellen.

- *Doel onderzoek*: ontdekken hoe bedrijven hun vrijwilligersprogramma's beter vorm kunnen geven
- *Soort onderzoek*: face-to-face interview van 30-40 minuten op een voor u geschikte locatie in de periode half november – begin december
- *Resultaten onderzoek:* worden geanonimiseerd, gepubliceerd in mijn masterscriptie, en teruggekoppeld aan deelnemende organisaties

Bijgevoegd vindt u meer informatie, voor verdere vragen ben ik via e-mail of telefonisch beschikbaar.

Ik zie uw reactie graag tegemoet,

Alvast bedankt,
Met vriendelijke groeten,

RSM Erasmus University

Stella Robeer
MSc Student International Management/CEMS
at Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University
P. +31625219050

INFORMATIEBLAD

Master Scriptie 'Designing Effective Corporate Volunteering Programs'

Algemene informatie

Onderzoeker	**Naam**	Stella Robeer
	Studie	MSc International Management/CEMS
	Instelling	Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus Universiteit
	Begeleider	Prof. Lucas Meijs
Contactgegevens	**E-mail**	485454sr@student.eur.nl
	Telefoon	+31625219050
Onderzoek	**Onderwerp**	Corporate volunteering: werknemers die via hun werkgever vrijwilligerswerk doen
	Doel	Ontdekken hoe bedrijven hun vrijwilligersprogramma's beter vorm kunnen geven

Praktische informatie

Soort interview	Face-to-face (in overleg telefonisch of via Skype)
Soort vragen	Open vragen, semi-gestructureerd interview
Locatie	Naar keuze van deelnemer
Duur	30-40 minuten
Datum en tijdstip	In overleg, in de periode 12 november – 9 december 2018

Deelname aan het onderzoek

Opslag van gegevens	1) Het interview zal (met toestemming) opgenomen worden met geluidsapparatuur 2) Opnames zullen op een veilige locatie worden opgeslagen en na het onderzoek vernietigd worden
Verwerking van gegevens	3) Verzamelde gegevens worden getranscribeerd en gebruikt voor data analyse 4) Verzamelde gegevens worden enkel voor dit onderzoek gebruikt en zijn alleen toegankelijk voor het onderzoeksteam (onderzoeker, begeleider en tweede lezer)
Anonimiteit en vertrouwelijkheid	5) Verzamelde gegevens worden geanonimiseerd, persoonlijke gegevens (zowel van individuen als organisaties) zullen niet gebruikt of genoemd worden
Deelname	6) Deelname aan dit onderzoek is vrijwillig en kan ten alle tijden ingetrokken worden
Resultaten	7) De geanonimiseerde resultaten van dit onderzoek zullen gepubliceerd worden in mijn masterscriptie, en mogelijk in andere publicaties (bijv. wetenschappelijk tijdschrift) 8) De resultaten van dit onderzoek zullen na afloop (februari 2019) gedeeld worden met alle deelnemers

To: [e-mail contact]

From: 485454sr@student.eur.nl

Subject: Interview request: master's thesis on corporate volunteering

Dear **[name contact]**,

My name is Stella Robeer, master's student at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University. For my master's thesis, I am researching 'corporate volunteering': employees that volunteer through the workplace. Considering the extensive experience that **[name organization]** has on this topic, I would like to ask you some questions in a personal interview.

- *Goal research:* discover how firms can design their corporate volunteering programs more effectively
- *Type of research:* face-to-face interview lasting 30-40 minutes at a location convenient for you in the period mid-November – early December
- *Results research:* will be anonymized, published in my master's thesis, and shared with participating organizations

Please find enclosed additional information. For further questions, I am available through e-mail or telephone.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you in advance,
Kind regards,

Stella Robeer
MSc Student International Management/CEMS
at Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University
P. +31625219050

INFORMATION SHEET

Master Thesis 'Designing Effective Corporate Volunteering Programs'

General information

Researcher	**Name** **Degree** **Institution** **Supervisor**	Stella Robeer MSc International Management/CEMS Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University Prof. Lucas Meijs
Contact information	**E-mail** **Phone**	485454sr@student.eur.nl +31625219050
Research	**Subject** **Goal**	Corporate volunteering: employees that volunteer through the workplace Discover how firms can more effectively design corporate volunteering programs

Practical information

Type of interview	Face-to-face (if preferred via phone or Skype)
Type of questions	Open questions, semi-structured interview
Location	Preferred location for the interviewee
Length	30-40 minutes
Date and time	To be agreed upon, during the period 12 November – 9 December 2018

Participation in this research

Storage of information	1) With permission, the interview will be recorded using sound equipment 2) Audio recordings will be stored in a secure location and destroyed after concluding the research
Processing of information	3) Gathered information will be transcribed and used for further data analysis 4) Gathered information will be used exclusively for this research and is only accessible to the research team (researcher, supervisor, and co-reader)
Anonimity and confidentiality	5) Gathered information will be anonymised; personally identifiable information (from both individuals and organizations) will not be used or mentioned
Participation	6) Participation in this research is completely voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time
Results	7) The anonymised results of this research will be published in my master's thesis, and possibly in other publications (e.g. journal articles) 8) The results of this research will be shared with all participants after concluding the research (February 2019)

C Interview Guide

INTERVIEWGIDS: BEDRIJVEN

Master Scriptie 'Designing Effective Corporate Volunteering Programs'

Introductie (1 minuut)

Mijn naam is Stella Robeer, master student International Management/CEMS aan de Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus Universiteit. Onder begeleiding van Prof. Lucas Meijs doe ik een afstudeeronderzoek naar 'corporate volunteering': werknemers die via hun werkgever vrijwilligerswerk doen. Het doel van dit onderzoek is om te ontdekken hoe bedrijven hun vrijwilligersprogramma's beter vorm kunnen geven. Hierbij interview ik experts, zoals u, die ervaring hebben met het organiseren van werknemervrijwilligersprogramma's binnen bedrijven die dit al voor langere tijd doen.

Deelname aan het onderzoek (3 minuten)

Alles wat er binnen dit interview besproken wordt, zal enkel gebruikt worden voor mijn onderzoek en is alleen toegankelijk voor het onderzoeksteam (onderzoeker, begeleider en tweede lezer). Verzamelde gegevens en resultaten worden alleen anoniem en vertrouwelijk aan derden bekend gemaakt.

Dit interview zal met uw toestemming, via een toestemmingsformulier, opgenomen worden met geluidsapparatuur. Aan de hand hiervan en gemaakte aantekeningen, zal het interview worden uitgeschreven en gebruikt voor data analyse. De resultaten van dit onderzoek zullen na afloop (februari 2019) gedeeld worden met alle deelnemers.

Opzet van het interview (2 minuten)

Het interview zal 30-40 minuten duren en is semi-gestructureerd. Dit betekent dat er een aantal onderwerpen en specifieke vragen zijn waar het interview zich op zal richten, maar er de mogelijkheid is hier van af te wijken. De volgorde van de vragen kan worden aangepast, er kunnen aanvullende vragen worden gesteld, en er is voor u de mogelijkheid om vragen te stellen.

Het interview begint met een aantal vragen over uw achtergrond, namelijk de organisatie waar u voor werkt en uw functie en werkzaamheden hier binnen. Het doel hiervan is om kennis te maken. Vervolgens zal ik een aantal openingsvragen stellen, gericht op de doelstelling(en) van uw werknemervrijwilligersprogramma en de opzet hiervan. Voorbeelden van de opzet zijn hoe het bestuur van uw programma er uit ziet, wat voor soort activiteiten werknemers uitvoeren, en hoe resultaten van uw programma worden gemeten. Op deze manier kan ik een beeld vormen van hoe het vrijwilligersprogramma er binnen uw organisatie uit ziet. Hierna zal ik mij richten op de hoofdvraag, namelijk mogelijke verbeterpunten van uw programma. Het doel hiervan is achterhalen op welke manier werknemervrijwilligersprogramma's beter vormgegeven kunnen worden. Ten slotte zal ik een aantal afsluitende vragen stellen, namelijk of u nog iets wilt toevoegen en of u nog verdere vragen heeft.

Heeft u nog vragen voor we beginnen?

Achtergrond informatie (5 minuten)

Nr.	Vraag	Probe
1	Kunt u mij iets vertellen over uw organisatie?	• Bedrijf • Sector
2	Kunt u mij iets vertellen over uw functie en werkzaamheden binnen uw organisatie?	• Aantal jaren ervaring • Taken en verantwoordelijkheden • Soort medewerker (fulltime/parttime, vrijwilliger)

Openingsvragen (10-15 minuten)

Nr.	Thema	Vraag	Probe
3	Doel-stelling(en)	a. Wat wilt uw organisatie bereiken met het werknemervrijwilligersprogramma? b. Wanneer is volgens u het werknemervrijwilligersprogramma succesvol?	• Maatschappij: betrokkenheid, impact • Werknemers: betrokkenheid, ontwikkeling • Bedrijf: reputatie, betrokkenheid
4	Vormgeving	c. Hoe ziet het werknemervrijwilligersprogramma er binnen uw organisatie uit? d. Waarom heeft u ervoor gekozen om het programma op deze manier op te zetten?	Zie Tabel

Onderdeel	Probe
Bestuur	• Besluitvorming • Coördinatie • Soort medewerkers (fulltime/parttime, vrijwilliger)
Maatschappelijke organisaties	• Soort organisatie • Passend bij bedrijf • Gebruik van intermediaries
Werven en behouden van deelnemers	• Motivatie • Methoden • Communicatie
Activiteiten	• Soort activiteit (gebruik van kennis/vaardigheden) • Duur activiteit (dag/langdurig project) • Training
Beloningen	• Sponsoring (tijd, geld, logistiek, management) • Erkenning en beloningen

Resultaten	• Meting van resultaten • Soort meetstaven • Stellen van doelen • Rapporteren van resultaten

Hoofdvragen (10 minuten)

Nr.	Vraag
5	Wat zou u willen verbeteren aan het werknemervrijwilligersprogramma?
6	Op welke manier zou u deze verbeterpunten aanpakken? / Op welke manieren zouden uw doelen beter behaald kunnen worden?
7	Welke verbeterpunten zijn volgens u het belangrijkst om op de korte termijn aan te pakken?

Afsluitende vragen (5 minuten)

Nr.	Vraag
8	Zijn er nog aspecten die volgens u belangrijk zijn bij het inrichten van een werknemervrijwilligersprogramma, maar die vooralsnog niet aan bod zijn gekomen in dit interview?
9	Wilt u nog iets anders toevoegen aan dit interview?

Afsluiting (2-3 minuten)

Hartelijk dank voor uw tijd en bereidheid om mee te werken aan mijn onderzoek. Ik zal de informatie die ik in dit interview en andere interviews heb verzameld gaan analyseren. Als u dit goed vindt, kan het zijn dat ik later nog contact opneem om navraag te doen aan de hand van gegeven antwoorden.

Het uiteindelijke doel van mijn onderzoek is het creëeren van een adviesrapport voor bedrijven en maatschappelijke organisaties voor het opzetten van werknemervrijwilligersprogramma's. Hierbij kijk ik specifiek naar welke aspecten van de vormgeving aangepast kunnen worden om gewenste doelstelling(en) beter te behalen.

Heeft u nog vragen voor mij?

INTERVIEW GUIDE: COMPANIES

Master Thesis 'Designing Effective Corporate Volunteering Programs'

Introduction (1 minute)

My name is Stella Robeer, master student International Management/CEMS at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University. Under supervision of Prof. Lucas Meijs, I am writing a thesis on the topic of 'corporate volunteering': employees that volunteer through the workplace. The goal of this research is to discover how firms can better design their corporate volunteering programs. In order to do so, I am interviewing experts like you, that have extensive experience with organising corporate volunteering programs.

Participation in this research (3 minutes)

Everything that will be discussed in this interview is used exclusively for my research and is only accessible to the research team (researcher, supervisor, and co-reader). Information and results that are gathered will be published anonymously and confidentially.

With your permission, this interview will be recorded using recording equipment. Based on this and notes taken, this interview will be transcribed and used for data analysis. The results of this research will be shared with all participants once finished (February 2019).

Structure of the interview (2 minutes)

The interview lasts 30-40 minutes and is semi-structured. This means that there are several topics and questions this interview will focus on but there is the possibility to deviate. The order of questions asked can be changed, there can be additional questions, and there is the possibility for you to ask questions.

The interview will start with questions about your background, namely the organization you work for and your function and tasks within this organization. The goal of this is to get to know each other. The next section will consist of several opening questions, relating to the goal(s) of the corporate volunteering program and its design. Examples of the design are how the management of the program looks like, what type of activities employees carry out, and how the results of the program are measured. This way, I will be able to get a better image of what the corporate volunteering program at your organization looks like. Following this, I will focus on my main question: possible points for improvement. The goal is to discover how corporate volunteering programs can be designed more effectively. Lastly, I will ask some closing questions, namely if you would like to add anything or if you have further questions.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Background information (5 minutes)

Nr.	Question	Probe
1	Could you tell me something about your organization?	• Company • Sector
2	Could you tell me something about your position and responsibilities at your organization?	• Years of experience • Tasks and responsibilities • Type of staff (fulltime/parttime, volunteer)

Opening questions (10-15 minutes)

Nr.	Theme	Question	Probe
3	Goals	a. What would your organization like to achieve with the corporate volunteering program? b. When do you consider the corporate volunteering program to be successful?	• Community: involvement, impact • Employees: engagement, development • Employer: reputation, commitment
4	Design	a. How does the corporate volunteering program at your organization look like? b. Why have you chosen to set up the corporate volunteering program as such?	See Table

Element	Probe
Program management	• Decision control • Coordination • Type of staff (fulltime/parttime, volunteer)
Partnerships with NPOs	• Type of organization • Fit with company • Use of intermediaries
Recruitment and retention of corporate volunteers	• Motivation • Communication • Methods
Volunteering activity	• Type of activity (use of knowledge/skills) • Duration of activity (day/long-term project) • Training

Incentives and support	• Support (time, financial, logistics, managerial) • Recognition and rewards
Outcome measurement	• Degree of measurement • Type of measures • Goal-setting • Reporting

Main questions (10 minutes)

Nr.	Question
5	What areas of the corporate volunteering program would you like to improve?
6	How would you address these improvement points? / How would you be better able to achieve your goals?
7	According to you, which improvement points are most important to tackle on the short term?

Finishing questions (5 minutes)

Nr.	Question
8	According to you, are there other elements that are important when designing corporate volunteering programs that have not been discussed so far?
9	Is there anything else you would like to add to this interview?

Closing statement (2-3 minutes)

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate in my research. I will be using the information that I have gathered in this interview and other interviews for data analysis. If you approve, I could contact you at a later stage to ask for additional information.

The final goal of my research is to create an advisory report on the design of corporate volunteering programs for firms, intermediaries, and non-profit organizations. For this, I will be looking at which specific design elements can be adjusted to better achieve the desired objective(s).

Do you have any other questions for me?

INTERVIEWGIDS: MAATSCHAPPELIJKE ORGANISATIES & INTERMEDIAIRS

Master Scriptie 'Designing Effective Corporate Volunteering Programs'

Introductie (1 minuut)

Mijn naam is Stella Robeer, master student International Management/CEMS aan de Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus Universiteit. Onder begeleiding van Prof. Lucas Meijs doe ik een afstudeeronderzoek naar 'corporate volunteering': werknemers die via hun werkgever vrijwilligerswerk doen. Het doel van dit onderzoek is om te ontdekken hoe bedrijven hun vrijwilligersprogramma's beter vorm kunnen geven. Hierbij interview ik experts, zoals u, die ervaring hebben met het organiseren van werknemervrijwilligersprogramma's voor bedrijven.

Deelname aan het onderzoek (3 minuten)

Alles wat er binnen dit interview besproken wordt, zal enkel gebruikt worden voor mijn onderzoek en is alleen toegankelijk voor het onderzoeksteam (onderzoeker, begeleider en tweede lezer). Verzamelde gegevens en resultaten worden alleen anoniem en vertrouwelijk aan derden bekend gemaakt.

Dit interview zal met uw toestemming, via een toestemmingsformulier, opgenomen worden met geluidsapparatuur. Aan de hand hiervan en gemaakte aantekeningen, zal het interview worden uitgeschreven en gebruikt voor data analyse. De resultaten van dit onderzoek zullen na afloop (februari 2019) gedeeld worden met alle deelnemers.

Opzet van het interview (2 minuten)

Het interview zal 30-40 minuten duren en is semi-gestructureerd. Dit betekent dat er een aantal onderwerpen en specifieke vragen zijn waar het interview zich op zal richten, maar er de mogelijkheid is hier van af te wijken. De volgorde van de vragen kan worden aangepast, er kunnen aanvullende vragen worden gesteld, en er is voor u de mogelijkheid om vragen te stellen.

Het interview begint met een aantal vragen over uw achtergrond, namelijk de organisatie waar u voor werkt en uw functie en werkzaamheden hier binnen. Het doel hiervan is om kennis te maken. Vervolgens zal ik een aantal openingsvragen stellen, gericht op de doelstelling(en) van werknemervrijwilligersprogramma's en de opzet hiervan. Voorbeelden van de opzet zijn uw samenwerking met bedrijven, wat voor soort activiteiten werknemers uitvoeren, en hoe resultaten van programma's worden gemeten. Op deze manier kan ik een beeld vormen van hoe vrijwilligersprogramma's via uw organisatie worden opgezet. Hierna zal ik mij richten op de hoofdvraag, namelijk mogelijke verbeterpunten van werknemervrijwilligersprogramma's. Het doel hiervan is achterhalen op welke manier werknemervrijwilligersprogramma's beter vormgegeven kunnen worden. Ten slotte zal ik een aantal afsluitende vragen stellen, namelijk of u nog iets wilt toevoegen en of u nog verdere vragen heeft.

Heeft u nog vragen voor we beginnen?

Achtergrond informatie (5 minuten)

Nr.	Vraag	Probe
1	Kunt u mij iets vertellen over uw organisatie?	• Organisatie • Werkzaamheden
2	Kunt u mij iets vertellen over uw functie en werkzaamheden binnen uw organisatie?	• Aantal jaren ervaring • Taken en verantwoordelijkheden • Soort medewerker (fulltime/parttime, vrijwilliger)

Openingsvragen (10-15 minuten)

Nr.	Thema	Vraag	Probe
3	Doel-stelling(en)	a. Wat willen bedrijven volgens u bereiken met werknemer-vrijwilligersprogramma's? b. Wanneer is volgens u een werknemervrijwilligersprogramma succesvol?	• Maatschappij: betrokkenheid, impact • Werknemers: betrokkenheid, ontwikkeling • Bedrijf: • reputatie, betrokkenheid
4	Vormgeving	c. Hoe zien werknemervrijwilligersprogramma's er binnen uw organisatie uit? d. Waarom heeft u ervoor gekozen om programma's op deze manier op te zetten?	Zie Tabel

Onderdeel	Probe
Bestuur	• Besluitvorming • Coördinatie • Soort medewerkers (fulltime/parttime, vrijwilliger)
Maatschappelijke organisatie	• Soort organisatie • Passend bij bedrijf • Gebruik van intermediaries
Werven en behouden van deelnemers	• Motivatie • Methoden • Communicatie
Activiteiten	• Soort activiteit (gebruik van kennis/vaardigheden) • Duur activiteit (dag/langdurig project) • Training

Beloningen	• Sponsoring (tijd, geld, logistiek, management) • Erkenning en beloningen
Resultaten	• Meting van resultaten • Soort meetstaven • Stellen van doelen • Rapporteren van resultaten

Hoofdvragen (10 minuten)

Nr.	Vraag
5	Wat zou u willen verbeteren aan werknemervrijwilligersprogramma's?
6	Op welke manier zou u deze verbeterpunten aanpakken?
7	Welke verbeterpunten zijn volgens u het belangrijkst om op de korte termijn aan te pakken?

Afsluitende vragen (5 minuten)

Nr.	Vraag
8	Zijn er nog aspecten die volgens u belangrijk zijn bij het inrichten van een werknemervrijwilligersprogramma, maar die vooralsnog niet aan bod zijn gekomen in dit interview?
9	Wilt u nog iets anders toevoegen aan dit interview?

Afsluiting (2-3 minuten)

Hartelijk dank voor uw tijd en bereidheid om mee te werken aan mijn onderzoek. Ik zal de informatie die ik in dit interview en andere interviews heb verzameld gaan analyseren. Als u dit goed vindt, kan het zijn dat ik later nog contact opneem om navraag te doen aan de hand van gegeven antwoorden.

Het uiteindelijke doel van mijn onderzoek is het creëeren van een adviesrapport voor bedrijven en maatschappelijke organisaties voor het opzetten van werknemervrijwilligersprogramma's. Hierbij kijk ik specifiek naar welke aspecten van de vormgeving aangepast kunnen worden om gewenste doelstelling(en) beter te behalen.

Heeft u nog vragen voor mij?

INTERVIEW GUIDE: NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS & INTERMEDIARIES

Master Thesis 'Designing Effective Corporate Volunteering Programs'

Introduction (1 minute)

My name is Stella Robeer, master student International Management/CEMS at the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University. Under supervision of Prof. Lucas Meijs, I am writing a thesis on the topic of 'corporate volunteering': employees that volunteer through the workplace. The goal of this research is to discover how firms can better design their corporate volunteering programs. In order to do so, I am interviewing experts like you, that have extensive experience with organising corporate volunteering programs.

Participation in this research (3 minutes)

Everything that will be discussed in this interview is used exclusively for my research and is only accessible to the research team (researcher, supervisor, and co-reader). Information and results that are gathered will be published anonymously and confidentially.

With your permission, this interview will be recorded using recording equipment. Based on this and notes taken, this interview will be transcribed and used for data analysis. The results of this research will be shared with all participants once finished (February 2019).

Structure of the interview (2 minutes)

The interview lasts 30-40 minutes and is semi-structured. This means that there are several topics and questions this interview will focus on but there is the possibility to deviate. The order of questions asked can be changed, there can be additional questions, and there is the possibility for you to ask questions.

The interview will start with questions about your background, namely the organization you work for and your function and tasks within this organization. The goal of this is to get to know each other. The next section will consist of several opening questions, relating to the goal(s) of the corporate volunteering program and its design. Examples of the design are your collaboration with companies, what type of activities employees carry out, and how the results of the program are measured. This way, I will be able to get a better image of what the corporate volunteering program at your organization looks like. Following this, I will focus on my main question: possible points for improvement. The goal is to discover how corporate volunteering programs can be designed more effectively. Lastly, I will ask some closing questions, namely if you would like to add anything or if you have further questions.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Background information (5 minutes)

Nr.	Question	Probe
1	Could you tell me something about your organization?	• Organization • Sector
2	Could you tell me something about your position and responsibilities at your organization?	• Years of experience • Tasks and responsibilities • Type of staff (fulltime/parttime, volunteer)

Opening questions (10-15 minutes)

Nr.	Theme	Question	Probe
3	Goals	a. According to you, what would companies like to achieve with corporate volunteering programs? b. When do you consider a corporate volunteering program to be successful?	• Community: involvement, impact • Employees: engagement, development • Employer: reputation, commitment
4	Design	a. How does your collaboration with companies for corporate volunteering programs look like? b. Why have you chosen to set up the collaboration as such?	See Table

Element	Probe
Program management	• Decision control • Coordination • Type of staff (fulltime/parttime, volunteer)
Partnerships with NPOs	• Type of organization • Fit with company • Use of intermediaries
Recruitment and retention of corporate volunteers	• Motivation • Communication • Methods
Volunteering activity	• Type of activity (use of knowledge/skills) • Duration of activity (day/long-term project) • Training

Incentives and support	• Support (time, financial, logistics, managerial) • Recognition and rewards
Outcome measurement	• Degree of measurement • Type of measures • Goal-setting • Reporting

Main questions (10 minutes)

Nr.	Question
5	What areas of the corporate volunteering program would you like to improve?
6	How would you address these improvement points?
7	According to you, which improvement points are most important to tackle on the short term?

Finishing questions (5 minutes)

Nr.	Question
8	According to you, are there other elements that are important when designing corporate volunteering programs that have not been discussed so far?
9	Is there anything else you would like to add to this interview?

Closing statement (2-3 minutes)

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate in my research. I will be using the information that I have gathered in this interview and other interviews for data analysis. If you approve, I could contact you at a later stage to ask for additional information.

The final goal of my research is to create an advisory report on the design of corporate volunteering programs for firms, intermediaries, and non-profit organizations. For this, I will be looking at which specific design elements can be adjusted to better achieve the desired objective(s).

Do you have any other questions for me?

D Consent Form

TOESTEMMINGSFORMULIER

Master Scriptie 'Designing Effective Corporate Volunteering Programs'

Algemene informatie

Onderzoeker	**Naam**	Stella Robeer
	Studie	MSc International Management/CEMS
	Instelling	Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus Universiteit
	Begeleider	Prof. Lucas Meijs
Contactgegevens	**E-mail**	485454sr@student.eur.nl
	Telefoon	+31625219050
Onderzoek	**Onderwerp**	Corporate volunteering: werknemers die via hun werkgever vrijwilligerswerk doen
	Doel	Ontdekken hoe bedrijven hun vrijwilligersprogramma's beter vorm kunnen geven

Deelname aan het onderzoek

Opslag van gegevens	1) Het interview zal (met toestemming) opgenomen worden met geluidsapparatuur 2) Opnames zullen op een veilige locatie worden opgeslagen en na het onderzoek vernietigd worden
Verwerking van gegevens	3) Verzamelde gegevens worden getranscribeerd en gebruikt voor data analyse 4) Verzamelde gegevens worden enkel voor dit onderzoek gebruikt en zijn alleen toegankelijk voor het onderzoeksteam (onderzoeker, begeleider en tweede lezer)
Anonimiteit en vertrouwelijkheid	5) Verzamelde gegevens worden geanonimiseerd, persoonlijke gegevens (zowel van individuen als organisaties) zullen niet gebruikt of genoemd worden
Deelname	6) Deelname aan dit onderzoek is vrijwillig en kan ten alle tijden ingetrokken worden
Resultaten	7) De geanonimiseerde resultaten van dit onderzoek zullen gepubliceerd worden in mijn masterscriptie, en mogelijk in andere publicaties (bijv. wetenschappelijk tijdschrift) 8) De resultaten van dit onderzoek zullen na afloop (februari 2019) gedeeld worden met alle deelnemers

Toestemming (gelieve omcirkelen welke van toepassing is)

Ik geef toestemming voor het opnemen van het interview met opnameapparatuur	Ja	Nee
Ik geef toestemming voor deelname aan het onderzoek aan de hand van bovenstaande voorwaarden	Ja	Nee

Naam deelnemer	Datum	Paraaf
Naam onderzoeker	Datum	Paraaf

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Master Thesis 'Designing Effective Corporate Volunteering Programs'

General information

Researcher	**Name** **Degree** **Institution** **Supervisor**	Stella Robeer MSc International Management/CEMS Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University Prof. Lucas Meijs
Contact information	**E-mail** **Phone**	485454sr@student.eur.nl +31625219050
Research	**Subject** **Purpose**	Corporate volunteering: employees that volunteer through the workplace Discover how firms can more effectively design corporate volunteer programs

Participation in this research

Storage of information	1) With permission, the interview will be recorded using sound equipment 2) Audio recordings will be stored in a secure location and destroyed after concluding the research
Processing of information	3) Gathered information will be transcribed and used for further data analysis 4) Gathered information will be used exclusively for this research and is only accessible to the research team (researcher, supervisor, and co-reader)
Anonimity and confidentiality	5) Gathered information will be anonymised; personally identifiable information (from both individuals and organizations) will not be used or mentioned
Participation	6) Participation in this research is completely voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time
Results	7) The anonymised results of this research will be published in my master's thesis, and possibly in other publications (e.g. journal articles) 8) The results of this research will be shared with all participants after concluding the research (February 2019)

Consent (please circle all that apply)

I consent to have my interview audio recorded	Yes	No
I consent to participate in this research on the basis of the conditions given above	Yes	No

Name participant	Date	Signature
Name researcher	Date	Signature

E Interview Sequence

Nr.	Type of Participant	Nr. of Participants	Function	Type of Interview	Code
1	Company	1	Director	Face-to-face	C1
2	Intermediary	1	Director	Face-to-face	IM1
3	Intermediary	1	Project Leader	Face-to-face	IM2
4	Company	1	Communication Advisor	Face-to-face	C2
5	Company	1	Chairman	Face-to-face	C3
6	Intermediary	1	Partner	Face-to-face	IM3
7	Company	1	Manager	Phone	C4
8	Company	2	Project Coordinator	Face-to-face	C5
9	Company	1	Project Manager	Face-to-face	C6
10	Non-profit Organization	1	Relation Manager	Face-to-face	NPO1
11	Company	1	Project Coordinator	Phone	C7
12	Company	1	Project Manager	Face-to-face	C8
13	Company	1	Head	Face-to-face	C9
14	Company	1	Management Development Consultant	Face-to-face	C10
15	Company	1	Senior Advisor	Phone	C11
16	Company	1	Project Manager	Face-to-face	C12
17	Company	2	Ambassador	Face-to-face	C13
18	Non-profit Organization	1	Job Coach	Phone	NPO2
19	Company	1	Sustainability Officer	Phone	C14
20	Non-profit Organization	1	Director	Face-to-face	NPO3

F Coding

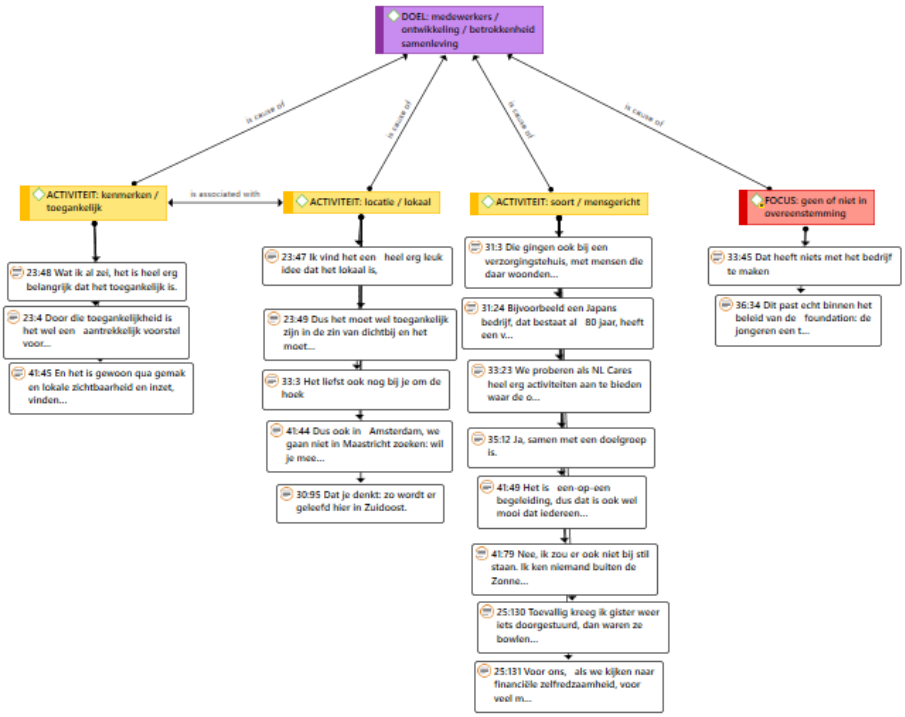

Figure 5.6: Example of a coding network

Source: This study