

## Strategic Planning for Corporate Volunteer Councils

As the needs of communities and business change and the need to address serious social problems continue to increase, many CVCs are in a state of transition. CVCs nationwide are experiencing a decrease in meeting attendance, new member recruitment and member retention. Employee Volunteer Program administrators, the primary membership for CVCs, are taking on more responsibilities and working longer hours. This leaves less time for CVC participation.

As a consequence of these changes, CVCs are realizing the need for a more focused direction. They are accomplishing this through strategic planning. Strategic planning enables CVCs to set long and short term goals.

There are several benefits of using strategic planning to focus the direction of your council. Benefits include but are not limited to the following:

**Understanding the Needs of the Community-** Focus on key issues in your community and build your plan around those needs.

**Mission** - Strategic planning helps to clarify the purpose of the CVC.

**Clarification of Roles** -The CVC and the Volunteer Center will have a clear understanding of their roles, this understanding fosters a mutually beneficial partnership.

**Membership Development** -A focused CVC can show the value of the CVC membership to potential new members and reinforce the value of membership to its current members. Strategic planning also teaches planning skills to members, which helps them in their everyday jobs.

**Team Work** - Well-managed strategic planning necessitates that tasks are made realistic and can be divided among CVC members. The busy employee volunteer program administrator is less likely to become overwhelmed and more willing to take on CVC tasks. CVC members will attain a shared sense of accomplishment when goals are reached.

**Visibility** -Through a focused effort CVCs can gain visibility in the community. They can position members as leaders and increase their visibility within their own workplaces.

HandsOn Network has developed several products and services that can assist you as your CVC begins to evaluate your current strategic goals. An example is the HandsOn Network Corporate Trainings. CVCs that have sponsored Corporate Trainings in partnership with HandsOn Network have used the opportunity to network with other national or regional CVC members. Moreover, the trainings provide an opportunity for the local CVC to invite prospective members to learn about the initiatives of the CVC, while also providing a new professional development experience.

In addition to HandsOn products and services, networking has helped CVCs as they embark on the strategic planning process. By networking with CVC members in other locations, you learn and share best success practices of CVCs, including working in partnership with Volunteer Centers, developing projects, and developing membership.

In summary, having a strategic focus for your Council adds value to your overall mission and the community in which you live and work. It strengthens membership, partnerships and visibility for your CVC. To find out more about how the HandsOn Network can assist your CVC with strategic planning contact the CVC Manager at [CVCinfo@HandsOnNetwork.org](mailto:CVCinfo@HandsOnNetwork.org) or call 404-979-2900 for customized assistance and resources.