Strengthening your workforce strategy for the AI era

Why CHROs and HR leaders are investing in employee volunteering alongside AI skilling.

As every company races to drive AI adoption among their workforce, a new conversation is emerging about the critical human skills that will be required for employees to succeed.

> **83% of companies agree that the growing use of AI will make human skills more vital.**
> Source: Taproot Foundation, Human Skills at Work

Empathy, ethical judgment, relationship-building, creativity and problem-solving are business-critical capabilities that AI cannot replicate or replace. The harder question is where those skills are actually developed. While traditional learning and development (L&D) can transfer knowledge effectively, it doesn't provide the lived experience needed to develop these human skills.

Volunteering is a proven experience-based learning and development tool

According to Benevity Impact Labs data, the workforce development pressures introduced by AI are prompting HR executives to reconsider the role of their volunteering programs from employee engagement to human skills development.

57%

are increasing their focus on how volunteering enables social connections between employees and teams

50%

looking for volunteering outcomes that spark innovation

49%

want volunteering to build empathy and issues awareness

47%

want it to build creativity and problem-solving

Skills-based volunteering is a proven experience-based learning tool with research showing it consistently outperforms traditional L&D at developing the human capabilities AI cannot replicate.

70% reported strengthened human skills through pro bono service.

Source: Taproot Foundation, Human Skills at Work

Volunteering challenges employees to tackle real-world problems alongside people outside their function and from diverse backgrounds. They learn to lead without authority and navigate ambiguity — the exact conditions where the skills your workforce strategy requires are actually formed.

How HR leaders are responding:

1. **Reframing employee volunteering as an experience-based L&D tool**
2. **Investing in volunteering alongside AI skilling to complement technical training with human skills development**
3. **Measuring leadership and skills development as core volunteering outcomes**
4. **Partnering and funding nonprofits as L&D vendors for professional, skills-based volunteering**

See how leading companies are using volunteering for learning and development

Read the State of Corporate Purpose 2026 report

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