

TAPROOT FOUNDATION 2017 CAMPAIGNS

DRIVE ENGAGEMENT

OVERVIEW

Taproot's Drive Engagement Campaign promotes the personnel and professional development value of pro bono service for both the beneficiary participant and the individual volunteer. Pro bono service builds the core competencies and capabilities of our nonprofit and corporate leaders. Through pro bono service, Taproot empowers nonprofit and corporate leaders to practice the essential leadership skills needed in our future workplaces and world.

THE CHALLENGE

The nature of work and the competencies required to thrive in our today's workplace are rapidly evolving. We need to purposefully develop new personal competencies and leadership qualities in individuals in order to make them successful employees and community members. Competencies like managing change, leading without authority, navigating ambiguity, and valuing diversity and difference, are just a few of the essential skillsets that all future leaders will need. However, both the for-profit and nonprofit sectors are facing challenges in how they secure, develop and retain employees.

For the nonprofit sector, securing and developing the sector's core talent has been one of the most significant challenges resulting from the lack of investment in nonprofit infrastructure. For organizations that typically spend less than 10% on overhead costs, leadership & development budgets and programs are virtually nonexistent. The sector's common lack of funding for personal and professional growth opportunities for employees, coupled with organizations' inability to offer more competitive salaries or perks, has resulted in a dire leadership deficit and loss of top talent. Like any organization, nonprofits heavily rely on high quality talent to drive their results. Without being able to attract or

retain these qualified individuals, nonprofits will struggle to fulfill their missions.

Experts agree that corporate leadership development also has room for improvement. Historically, corporate leadership development has struggled to prepare leaders for the specific challenges inherent to today's work environment. Corporate leaders need a new set of skills that emphasizes global mindset, agility, and working in increasingly complex and ambiguous situations. The best companies recognize a need to build leadership development opportunities that offer rising talent the chance for hands-on learning experiences and opportunities to take risks in situations that hold real consequence. But many companies struggle to build leadership development programs that engage talent in a way that meaningfully builds these—critical skills.

Pro bono is the ultimate in experiential learning. By focusing on experiential learning, we can begin to develop the competencies and global mind-sets our people will need to lead our teams, our organizations and our society. All organizations, regardless of sector, want their personnel to practice and build leadership competencies in innovative ways. All organizations know they need to simultaneously offer personal development and social purpose opportunities. We need to evolve the way we think about learning and development for our nonprofit and for-profit talent.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Pro bono service is an invaluable experiential learning opportunity that prepares nonprofit and for-profit leaders for the complexities of today's world and work. Through pro bono service, individuals build and practice the core skills and competencies they will need to drive successful organizations and businesses, as well as to solve our most pressing global challenges. We have the opportunity to better articulate and promote the value of pro bono service as a talent development strategy.

Nonprofits can use pro bono service to not only overcome critical organizational challenges, but also as a low-cost, strategic

way to provide the development opportunities that nonprofit employees crave, need and deserve. Pro bono service is not only a stretch opportunity for the individual pro bono volunteers. For the nonprofit receiving the services, being a pro bono team lead or team member is an invaluable learning opportunity. For instance, pro bono participants from the nonprofit need to practice their client relationship management, need to inspire team members, and need to craft clear, articulate communications that drive results. The nonprofit participant must distill information and effectively build relationships. She must practice self-

awareness, demonstrate integrity, and problem-solve during a fast-paced project with unfamiliar and diverse teammates. All of these skillsets are those that our nonprofit personnel will need to effectively lead themselves, their teams and their organizations. In a sector with limited funds for professional development, pro bono service provides a creative, viable way to develop and retain the nonprofit sector's best and brightest talent.

For companies, pro bono service is an ideal win-win employee experience. Whether a millennial or a boomer, most employees are seeking purpose-driven opportunities within their day to day career. Pro bono service deeply connects an employee to community, company and colleagues in a way that few corporate programs are able to achieve. Simply, it's good for the individual, the community and the business.

By fully recognizing the personnel development benefits of pro bono service and maximizing its value, we can expand leadership development programming for both nonprofit and for-profit organizations. Through targeted, intentional pro bono engagements that are designed to identify, address, and provide the opportunity to build relevant skills, we can begin to properly prepare our future leaders. The challenges of our organizations, our businesses and our communities are too vast to ignore or undervalue how we develop our leaders. Pro bono service is our solution.

WHAT WE CAN DO TOGETHER

Taproot is looking for partners and peers who want to make a difference in how pro bono service develops leaders among the nonprofit and for-profit sectors.

We are looking for partners interested in:

- **Identifying the future leadership competencies that are most relevant to the nonprofit sector:** What skills or capabilities do nonprofit leaders and all employees need to thrive and succeed?
- **Unifying the for-profit and nonprofit leadership development agenda:** How can we promote more cross-sector dialogue around this topic? How can we identify similar needs? How can we begin to develop and share resources and best practices?
- **Building nonprofits' awareness of the personnel development benefits of pro bono service:** How can we communicate pro bono's leadership development potential and empower nonprofits to value and adopt this approach?
- **Engaging nonprofit leaders in pro bono service as a targeted talent development strategy:** How can we design and pilot pro bono experiences within nonprofit organizations that purposefully allow a person to practice and build new relevant competencies?
- **Designing your company's pro bono program as a leadership & development strategy:** How can you use pro bono service to connect your employee engagement and leadership and development strategies?

There are consortiums, nonprofits, intermediaries, companies and philanthropic organizations all working to develop leadership competencies among nonprofit and for-profit employees. Taproot recognizes the contributions and expertise of these existing partners, and we are looking forward to utilizing our core expertise in pro bono service to partner with those of similar passion and commitment.

WHY TAPROOT

For over 15 years, Taproot Foundation has helped to define, build and advance the field of pro bono service. Taproot is a proven leader in using pro bono service as a means to take action against larger societal challenges. Our award-winning programs and corporate advisory teams are adapt at identifying the critical capacity needs of social changes organizations. As a peer, advocate and partner, we are a trusted voice among the nonprofit community, and have collaborated to re-envision the talent resources that social change organizations need to succeed. Our stakeholders range across for-profits, nonprofits, philanthropic organizations and individual community members, and by building cross-sector partners, we have successfully mobilized and organized these diverse constituents behind a shared vision of social change success. We do not rest on our reputation or achievements. Our campaign work is indicative of our commitment to continue to lead, mobilize and engage professionals in pro bono service that drives social change.