

## Community Mark – Selected Application Questions / Answers

**How do you measure and evaluate the difference that your projects make to the community and your business?**

### **Springboard Community Day**

In February each year we meet with Springboard to discuss their needs. This takes 2 hours visit and communication time. A project is agreed and a day proposed. There is liaison with team managers to put forward someone from their team, either a volunteer or someone requiring specific team building skills. This takes approximately hours for all of the teams.

A project-planning meeting is arranged involving 11 people, which takes 2 hours. The day involves 11 people and takes 8 hours. Approximately £100 is used for refreshments and equipment. Afterwards approximately 10 hours are used to create publicity and review the success of the day. Our total input equals 124 hours and our cash input equals £100.

We want to help improve and maintain a local resource for families with young children and disabilities. We have now completed 2 murals in the garden, repainted an office and carried out some other refurbishment work. The murals fit in with the surrounding play areas to extend the theme of the play equipment.

We have taken 22 people out of their normal day job for this team building. This improves the development of our staff to plan a project and see it to the end. It also helped with staff retention. We have also raised our business profile in the local area by using the local media to publicise our community day.

### **Work Experience at Elementus**

We have contacts at 2 schools that approach us to take work experience students.

The planning for these visits by our Business Manager responsible for recruitment takes 4 hours per student. The students are provided with a mentor who invests about 7 hours training per student. The total time invested amounts to 22 hours.

We want to demonstrate to students, not just our core business, but also the support roles that are required for a successful organisation, including finance, marketing and administration.

We also want them to understand how they should dress and behave in a work environment.

We hope that placements will allow more students to make a more informed decision on their career paths and lead to full recruitment in future years. Last year 2 students spent a week with us. One in particular was very enthusiastic throughout his time with us and has asked to return this year. Having work experience students allows non-managerial staff to practice their team leadership, communication and mentoring skills. It also allows our company to understand the type of work that students will be searching for during future years.

### **YMCA Y-Centre**

Our contract with the YMCA Y-Centre includes low cost training and the provision of free health and safety support. We carried out 4 low cost training sessions during the last year. We provided assistance with various health & safety issues, including the production of a 'Declaration of use for the catering facilities' and 'Fire Statement policy and procedure'.

The time taken for this project amounted to 15 hours.

We want to use our expertise to assist local organisations comply with health and safety legislative requirements.

We want to ensure they are providing a safe and healthy environment for the public and their employees. We want to help their employees improve their own skills. We want to protect them from unplanned expenditure resulting from accidents.

We have helped the Y-Centre to complete their health & safety documentation. This will create a safe and healthy environment for the public and the employees. We have improved the skills of the Y-Centre employees. It allows our company to improve our training skills. It allows us to understand the contribution this charity makes to local life. It also helps us to understand how charities operate, so we can identify opportunities in other businesses.

### **Elementus Tuck Box**

A member of staff operates a charity tuck-box. 30 minutes per month that amounts to a total time of 6 hours per year.

We want to raise money for local causes on a regular basis. The charity tuck box allows us to achieve this on an on-going basis, which is sustainable. Since this was started in Spring 2007, over £90 has been raised and donated to the Springboard project.

The charity tuck box provides employees with a convenient method of purchasing snacks, without leaving our premises. This saves them time, while also creating a feel good factor.

### **St. Wilfrid's Enterprise Days**

We provided two presentations, which took approximately 6 hours to prepare and deliver. We also spent about 6 hours at the school supporting the students with the production of health & safety posters. This amounted to a total time of 12 hours.

All young people need to know about health and safety at work. Studies by the Health & Safety Executive have clearly identified that young people starting out on a job are more likely to have an accident, as they are less aware of the risks they face. Providing this support to St. Wilfrid's will prepare their students for the workplace and minimise their chance of having an accident.

We have now completed 2 training days for year 10 students as part of their Enterprise studies. See attached press release.

This sort of support raises our profile in local schools and provides good presentation and communication opportunities with a difference audience. It helps our own employees improve their presentation and interpersonal skills. It also raises our business profile in the local area through word of mouth from the students and via the local media.

### **How do you enable your employees to contribute to the community?**

The Executive Management team at our company encourage our employees to participate in fundraising and other initiatives to support the local community, as we realise it is the right thing to do if we want to continue to be a successful company and a respected local employer. We use our internal newsletter to publicise up and coming opportunities for employees to volunteer to support local community projects and fundraising initiatives. We also encourage employees to put forward their own ideas for fundraising or community partnerships and communicate the channels to go through to make this happen. In 2007, we created the position of Business Support Consultant – Corporate Responsibility. This person is responsible for coordinating our community initiatives and she has attended all team meetings to explain her role and the support she can provide to create community partnerships.

When organising our annual community day, we ask for volunteers who want to be involved. These volunteers are each given a specific task to carry out and are involved in the whole planning process. They don't just turn up on the day. This gives a sense of ownership to the project and also a sense of achievement once the project has been completed. By including photographs of all volunteers in the after event publicity, this also helps with celebrating success. When providing students with work experience, we look for enthusiastic employees who want to act as the mentors. They can occupy any position in the company and they will receive recognition by using internal publicity to celebrate their achievements. With regard to the YMCA Y-Centre and St Wilfrid's Enterprise projects, only consultants with health & safety skills can support these projects. However, we try to encourage as many as possible to be involved, so that they all get the opportunity to give something back to the local community. We never have any difficulty finding volunteers who wish to be involved in these projects. Employees are also encouraged by e-mail and newsletters to put forward their favourite charities, especially local organisations that they are involved with for inclusion in our programme. All community initiatives and fundraising achievements are publicised internally using e-mail, our newsletter and notice boards to ensure all employees are aware of our successes.

### **What are your commitments for the next three years?**

#### **1. Commitments to sustain and improve your community impact in next 3 years?**

We will link with more local schools to aid their work experience programmes.

#### **How you will measure your commitments?**

We will publicly report in our annual CR report the number of students we have provided work experience opportunities for.

#### **2. Commitments to sustain and improve your community impact in next 3 years?**

We will continue to liaise with the Horsham Volunteer Centre to identify local organisations who require health & safety support e.g. Furni-Aid.

#### **How you will measure your commitments?**

We will publicly report in our annual CR report the names of the organisations we have supported and the value of the free health & safety support we provide.

#### **3. Commitments to sustain and improve your community impact in next 3 years?**

We will formalise a reproducible work experience programme.

#### **How you will measure your commitments?**

We will create a documented programme that can be made available to schools. This will be publicly reported in our annual CR report.

#### **4. Commitments to sustain and improve your community impact in next 3 years?**

We will invite residents from charitable organisations to take part in our community day.

#### **How you will measure your commitments?**

This will be publicly reported on our web site and in press releases issued to the local media.