

AMERICANS IN ACTION



Charity Begins At Work

by Don Sodo

(NAPSA)—It may surprise some people to hear they can make a difference in the world by doing little more than going to work everyday. That's because workplace giving campaigns are making it easier than ever for people to support causes close to their hearts.

In fact, it's estimated that in the year 2000, nearly 2 billion dollars were raised through these campaigns, benefitting a variety of charities nationwide.

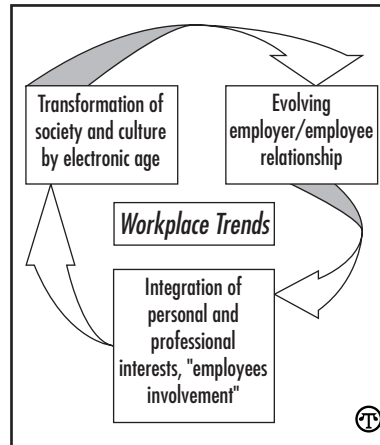
Charities and the people they help, however, are not the only ones who benefit from the campaigns. Experts say giving in the workplace can raise employee morale, increase productivity and benefit a company as a whole.

Studies show that given the choice, employees would prefer to work for a company that supports charitable causes. Furthermore, workers who have a say in what charitable groups their companies support tend to report high levels of satisfaction. Recent surveys report as many as 70 percent of employees prefer a broader choice when giving to charity.

As a result, many businesses now strengthen their relationship with their employees and communities through charitable options tailored to workers' individual preferences.

To help customize their giving programs, companies often turn to groups like America's Charities—a group of about 100 organizations, including Make-A-Wish Foundation of America, America's Second Harvest, NAACP, Ronald McDonald House and many more of the nation's best-known charities.

Employers can work with America's Charities to set up charitable giving programs—similar to benefit packages—that can help keep current employees happy, attract prospective workers and



Employee activities, such as workplace charitable campaigns, can help integrate personal and professional interests.

may do wonders for a company's public image. Such workplace campaigns can help enhance company branding as well.

For example, the Sears "You Can Make A Difference" campaign offers employees the opportunity to give under a brand developed expressly to carry the message of the company's charitable endeavors to its employees and community. American Airlines, Fidelity, and many other companies are positioned similarly.

Once a program is created, America's Charities helps companies administer their charitable campaigns or can handle the entire process on its own. Also, the group provides an online tool that lets employers run campaigns from their desktops.

America's Charities can help companies maintain employee morale, raise productivity and benefit their communities—for many American businesses, that's the real bottom line. For more information visit www.charities.org.

Mr. Sodo is president and CEO of America's Charities.