



The Community Investment team at Business in the Community aims to develop and promote effective community investment and help companies measure and benchmark the impact of their activity on the company and community.

Cares, a Business in the Community initiative is a vehicle for employers to support their employees to get involved in the communities where they operate, addressing local community needs and supporting strategic business issues. Cares operates in 22 locations around the UK.

Engage is a global campaign that aims to increase the quality and extent of employee engagement in the development of healthy and sustainable communities. Leading the campaign is the Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF), working in partnership with Business in the Community and a coalition of strategic NGOs.

This series of Manager's Briefings provides summaries and case studies for company managers on a series of community investment topics:

- The business case for employee community involvement
- Skills development in the community
- Time off policies
- Team challenges
- Fundraising & matched giving
- Awards & recognition
- Payroll giving

Also available:

- Making it Happen: a complete guide to employee community involvement
- Made to Measure: a guide to measuring and evaluating corporate community involvement (coming Spring 2003)

For web copies visit [www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk) or ring Ella Ward at BITC on 0870 600 2482 for paper copies.

**BUSINESS in the**

**COMMUNITY**

# skills development in the community

manager's briefing

With thanks to series sponsor:

**BARCLAYS**

Community involvement is a matter of good business sense - by helping communities to be vibrant places to live and work in we help our customers, our employees, and the wider communities in which we operate. Barclays is one of the top five corporate contributors in the UK. Our global community investment totalled £31.1 million in 2001 supporting programmes addressing social inclusion, the arts, education, the environment and people with disabilities.

Barclays Community programme is about much more than just giving money though. Fundamental to its success is the support that we provide to our employees who give their time and skills to the communities in which they live and work. We are very proud of their efforts, and not a little humbled by them. In 2002, over 18,000 employees took part in Barclays supported community activities.

For more information visit [www.barclays.co.uk/socialresponsibility](http://www.barclays.co.uk/socialresponsibility)

This Manager's Briefing was written in association with:



**BUSINESS in the**

**COMMUNITY**

Business in the Community is a unique movement in the UK of 700 member companies. Our purpose is to inspire, challenge, engage and support business in continually improving its positive impact on society.

Tel: 0870 600 2482  
Website: [www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk)  
Email: [cci@bitc.org.uk](mailto:cci@bitc.org.uk)



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Printed on Evolution Satin, containing 75% recycled paper and 25% virgin fibre, which is elementally chlorine free pulp.  
Registered Office: 137 Shepherdess Walk, London, N1 7RQ Tel: 0870 600 2482  
Registered Charity No: 297716 Company Limited by guarantee No: 1619253  
January 2003  
Designed by [www.sageassociates.co.uk](http://www.sageassociates.co.uk)

Sponsored by

**BARCLAYS**

## summary

This briefing shows how community involvement and especially secondments and mentoring can be integrated as a development tool into any company's training and development and HR programmes. This briefing outlines good practice case studies and 'Top Tips' for anyone thinking of starting their own programmes.

“Community activities can provide fantastic opportunities for personal and team development. Employees can develop new and existing skills, broaden their knowledge and deepen their understanding of the communities in which they live and work. It is also complements our business commitment to lifelong learning.”

Valerie Scoular, Group Head of HR, Barclays PLC

## the business benefits of employee community involvement

Research by a group of 18 major companies<sup>1</sup> found hard evidence of gains in skills and competency levels and of wider business benefits from employee community involvement. The companies evaluated the community activity of 400 of their employees, particularly in developing skills. The survey showed that gains in competency compared favourably with traditional training outcomes. This was corroborated by line managers. Clearly the individual, the community and the company will benefit from employee community involvement since it can provide a flexible and effective tool in developing competency when properly managed.



### Putting it in context

#### Responsible Business Practice

Is the management of a company's impact on society and the environment so as to add value to the company and increase wider economic and social well-being now and over the longer term. This impact may be through operations, products or services and through interaction with key stakeholders such as employees, customers, investors, local communities, suppliers and others.

#### Corporate Community Investment

Is a practical set of programmes and processes which enable companies to bring the skills and time of their employees to areas of community need, along with other resources such as donated goods and services, matched giving and use of premises.

#### Employee Community Involvement

Is a major component of corporate community investment. It describes the ways in which employees can participate in community projects with their company's support.

<sup>1</sup> The research was undertaken by Michael Tuffrey of the Corporate Citizenship Company/PRIMA Europe during 1997. The 18 companies involved were: Barclays, BP, British Airways, BT, Commercial Union, Diageo, Halifax, IBM UK, KPMG, Lloyds/TSB, Marks and Spencer, NatWest, Sainsbury's, W H Smith, Sun Life, Unipart, Whitbread, and Zurich. The full report is published as Valuing Community Involvement - practical guidance on measuring the business benefits from employee involvement in community activity. ISBN 1 902270 002.

## skills development through community activity

Most medium to large companies will have a framework of core skills and competencies which describe the required attributes of the successful employee or manager. Typically these will include:

- Financial and budgeting skills
- Understanding, influencing and persuading people and organisations
- People skills – caring, listening, negotiating and managing others
- Organisational, time and stress management skills
- Innovating and taking decisions
- Communication skills – written and verbal
- Building up networks and alliances
- Learning to analyse and summarise clearly
- Developing effective teams
- Planning and achieving business objectives on time

The development of many of these personal skills is less susceptible to classroom or formal training. This is the area where structured community involvement offers an excellent complement to other in-company programmes. Many leading companies include community involvement in their portfolio of development opportunities for employees and find that it works. The options most often taken up for skills development are:

- Full time, long term secondments for example a one year career break, carrying out a general function in a charity, with continuous employment and guaranteed return
- Individual, part time project assignment for example, release for 100 hours during work time over three months to undertake a specific project in a community group, often contributing a specific skill
- Management committee/trustee positions, including non executive positions such as school governor, charity treasurer, Education Business Partnership director
- One to one support, for example working with individuals such as school children or young ex-offenders, as a personal mentor
- Team volunteering (challenge events), for example a team of staff working to achieve a specific exercise such as collecting food and clothes for homeless people
- Individual volunteering, for example, any personal voluntary activity. This can involve using and developing existing skills or learning new ones.

## community action is an effective tool for training and development of employees because:

- Employees have to adjust to a new and unfamiliar environment
- Projects involve real work with time limits
- The employee or team is motivated to succeed
- Almost all projects call for people skills
- Employees depend on their own initiative and must take decisions
- The project can be tailored to the employee's or the team's own development needs
- Projects provide an opportunity to learn from different management styles
- Successful completion of a demanding project builds confidence
- Working for a good cause gives personal satisfaction

	Team Challenge	Mentoring	Dev. Assignments	Partners in Leadership	Twining	Pro-help	Secondments	Volunteering
Teamwork	■		■				■	
Confidence		■	■			■	■	■
Communications	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Time Management	■		■			■		■
Innovation	■		■					■
Leadership	■			■	■			
Decision Making	■		■				■	■
Influencing Skills	■	■	■	■	■		■	■
Coaching skills		■		■	■			
Presentation skills			■			■	■	
Change	■	■	■				■	
Managing people	■	■	■	■	■			■

## evaluation techniques

Self assessment questionnaires are the main tools to evaluate and identify the development in skills and competencies. Questionnaires should be completed before and after the community activity and be based on a list of core competencies. Furthermore the assessment should be corroborated by a line manager or work colleague. Host organisations should also take part in the evaluation process so that longer-term benefits can be assessed and quantified.

## skills development through secondments

### what is a secondment?

Secondment is the loan of an employee from one organisation to another, for a specific time period, and for a specific role or responsibility. The seconding organisation (the employer) undertakes to maintain the seconded on the payroll during the period of the secondment, and to maintain all other usual benefits.

Secondments can provide an employee with a positive way of moving forward, whether it is to

find new energy and focus in mid-career, or to prepare the way for retirement, or perhaps early retirement if a company is restructuring. Working for a set time limit in an entirely different environment can re-ignite enthusiasm, provide rewarding challenges, re-build confidence, help discover new skills or the ability to transfer existing ones. It can be a highly positive experience both for the employee and the organisation benefiting from his or her presence. Secondment schemes are extremely popular

both with employees and with community organisations and are a powerful tool in building community relations. Secondments typically last between 3 months and 2 years.

From a secondment, employees gain from intensive development of new and existing skills in real life situations, including the ability to initiate and manage change, management of people, project management skills and a broadening of horizon and knowledge.

## good practice in secondment programmes

- The employee should always want to do the secondment voluntarily. The decision to do a secondment should be taken after discussions with line management and HR in order to define clear objectives.
- The secondment opportunity should be well defined by the voluntary organisation and the employer should be clear that the organisation understands its responsibilities.
- The seconded should always visit the organisation before confirming the secondment. This visit will be an opportunity for the employee to assess how the organisation works, discuss the proposed position in more detail, and develop a feel for the organisation. Neither the seconded nor organisation should feel under obligation to accept – choosing the right secondment opportunity is as important as choosing the right training course or career path.
- Agree in writing between the company (HR and line management), the receiving organisation and the seconded the following:

- I. Duration and job role
- II. Confirmation of terms and conditions – salary, benefits, tax arrangements, reimbursement of expenses, support in kind (i.e. mobile phones and lap tops)
- III. Confirmation of who will be the seconded's main contact in the company to ensure communications are maintained, that they receive company briefings, and that review meetings take place
- IV. A clear plan for the end of the secondment. Is the seconded coming back to the same job role, has the secondment been offered as part of a career development plan, or is the secondment being offered as a transition from full-time employment to early retirement?
- V. A full induction to the organisation. Employers and organisations should be aware that insufficient preparation for the change in culture can affect the whole secondment.
- VI. Review meetings with the company representative, seconded and receiving organisation. These should be held at regular intervals to check progress and forward plan

## case studies of skills development through secondments

case studies		
<p><b>Anglian Water Group (AWG)</b> <i>secondments for graduate trainees</i></p> <p><b>The programme</b> As part of AWG's community policy, graduate management trainees spend 3 months of their first 2 years on secondment to a community organisation. The aim is that this will provide personal development for the graduate outside of AWG's mainstream business, whilst benefiting the local community. They keep a record of personal development, which then forms a case study to be submitted to the Group HR Director.</p>	<p><b>The outputs</b> Aaron Davis, AWG management trainee was seconded to Project Trust to raise the awareness in the Anglian Water region about the possibilities and advantages of taking a gap year. He visited Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire and presented in schools and sixth form colleges. He was also required to spend time working on the Isle of Coll in the Hebrides where Project Trust have their headquarters.</p>	<p><b>Key skills developed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed team management skills through the supervision of 6 potential volunteers</li> <li>• Presentation skills</li> <li>• Time planning and organising skills from organising school presentations</li> <li>• Development of commercial awareness and ability to negotiate as a result of developing third party partnerships</li> </ul>
<p><b>For further information contact:</b> Sheilagh Linkleter Tel: 01733 414 409 Email: slinkleter@anglianwater.com</p>		

case studies	
<p><b>Royal &amp; Sun Alliance</b> <i>community assignments for personal development</i></p> <p><b>The programme</b> Royal &amp; SunAlliance use community assignments, (one day a week for 14 weeks) as an effective way to encourage personal development and enhance wider knowledge for employees. Individuals' specific objectives are matched to appropriate community projects.</p> <p>John Ashton, an employee from Royal &amp; SunAlliance was commissioned to develop the Bangladesh Porishad's business plan for a sports centre. (Bangladesh Porishad is a community advice and training centre offering advisory services and facilities to meet a whole array of community needs in Bradford.)</p> <p><b>The outputs</b> Working closely with the Sports Development Officer John's project took one hundred hours in total on a day-release basis. In this short space of time, John completed a quality business plan, developed a fund-raising strategy, gave practical advice and</p>	<p>support to compiling funding applications and provided useful direction for the centre as a whole.</p> <p><b>Key skills developed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Management skills developed (John is now seconded full time to a project management role within Royal &amp; Sun Alliance)</li> <li>• Influencing and negotiation skills</li> <li>• Self-confidence and interpersonal skills.</li> </ul> <p><i>"The project was challenging and most demanding, but a very worthwhile experience from which I have learned an awful lot. I feel I have contributed something of value."</i> John Ashton, Royal SunAlliance seconded to Bangladesh Porishad, Bradford</p>
<p><b>For further information contact:</b> Graham Briscoe Tel: 0117 934 5178 Email: graham.briscoe@uk.royalsun.com</p>	

## what is mentoring?

Mentoring is defined as the support given voluntarily by one person to another. Mentoring is increasingly recognised as a valuable tool to help someone through an important transition in their lives, to broaden their horizons or achieve their full potential.

Examples of mentoring activity include support for:

- A young person in school. (This usually takes place with students in secondary school.)
- Head teachers
- Community entrepreneurs
- Young people “at risk” who might be excluded from school, offending, abusing drugs, in a family that is breaking down, or unemployed.
- Pre-release prisoners and ex-offenders.
- Homeless people.
- Young people in, or leaving, care.
- Young people wishing to set up a business.

Employees who mentor develop skills in communication, influencing and motivating, and facilitation and coaching.

## case studies of skills development through mentoring

case studies		
<p><b>Marks &amp; Spencer</b> <i>buddies for homeless on work placements</i></p> <p><b>The programme</b> Following a successful pilot in July 2001, Marks &amp; Spencer committed to providing 600 work experience placements in 13 cities nationwide, to help homeless people re-integrate into the world of work. Word-of-mouth praise for the programme has already lead to 8 further cities/stores asking to participate. HR managers co-ordinate the programme, contribute to training development, manage employees who volunteer to be ‘buddies and develop a debrief structure</p>	<p>that provides invaluable constructive feedback to the homeless client. The mentoring role is crucial for people affected by homelessness who are trying to get back into work because, often marginalised from mainstream life, they need professional and compassionate support whilst trying to regain independent living. Most importantly, mentoring provides a helping hand rather than a hand out.</p> <p><b>The outputs</b> Employee morale, satisfaction and motivation has increased. Staff gain insights into the issues faced by the homeless, and the reality of re-adapting</p>	<p>to mainstream life and the routines of work. HR managers received specialised training and the buddies developed a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of their own post.</p> <p><b>Key skills developed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching/Training</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Listening skills</li> <li>• Counselling.</li> </ul> <p><b>For more information contact:</b> Freda Pinner Tel: 020 7268 3629 <b>Email:</b> freda.pinner@marks-and-spencer.com</p>

case studies		
<p><b>Arriva plc</b> <i>Mentoring in schools</i></p> <p><b>The programme</b> In Sunderland, Arriva and Sandhill View school have developed and piloted a mentoring programme for Year 10 pupils. Twenty Arriva employees and 20 pupils took part. This was the company's first</p>	<p>experience of an employee volunteering programme. The evaluation of the mentoring programme showed an all round benefit to those involved.</p> <p><b>Key skills developed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working in teams</li> <li>• Coaching skills</li> <li>• Listening skills</li> </ul>	<p><b>For more information contact:</b> Rebecca Miller Tel: 0191 520 4109 <b>Email:</b> millerr@arriva.co.uk</p>

## ten steps to success in mentoring schemes

1. Establish the aims and objectives of the programme. What resource and time will be allocated to the programme? How do we measure the success for both individuals involved and for the organisation?
2. Identify the target group. Mentoring may work with some and not others. Mentoring only works effectively with willing partners.
3. Recruit mentors. Not everyone is appropriate. You will need to consider a range of recruitment strategies from the low key, “word of mouth” to the higher profile of advertising. Mentors should be assessed for their suitability. Put procedures in place to police check mentors when dealing with children and other vulnerable groups.
4. Induct or train mentors. At a minimum this should include the aims of the programme, information on the organisation and the client group, review of mentor roles and skills, the boundaries of the mentor relationship and any relevant procedures relating to a particular group e.g. child protection procedures. In some cases, the problems encountered by the client group may be quite complex and the depth of training should reflect this.
5. Prepare the individuals to be mentored. They should understand what the relationship can and can't do for them. Their briefing should include the aims of the programme, the benefits to them, their responsibilities, the role of the mentor and where they can turn to for support.
6. Set targets, standards or goals – it is important for all pairings to establish a rapport but it is equally important to have a focus for the relationship. Realistic goals need to be agreed at the outset by all parties which take into account the needs of the client. This in turn will contribute to measuring the overall impact of the project.
7. Establish administrative support procedures. It is sensible to have a fixed point for the cancellation of and rearrangement of meetings and a point of reference for the parties involved. Mentors do need a reference point for supplementary information or any subsequent queries they may have. This is an often under-estimated but essential element.
8. Provide feedback and ongoing support. Mentors may not always receive adequate feedback from the person they mentor and will benefit from a third party involvement. Networking events or meetings with other mentors is a useful way of sharing practice and offering support.
9. Monitor progress – it is important to have a third party monitoring the relationship as well as the participants involved. Monitoring will provide information on progress being made and can be useful in resolving problems and conflicts at an early stage.
10. Evaluate – everyone knows mentoring works – but can we prove it? Evaluation provides information that can be used to make the programme more effective in the future, gives evidence of outcomes and the value of mentoring, and is a way to promote the success of the programme.

case studies		
<p><b>The Barclays University</b> <i>Life-long learning through the community</i></p> <p><b>The programme</b> The Barclays University, open to all Barclays' employees, has been designed to facilitate life long learning and personal development. Community activities are offered through the University as a way of gaining practical experience in a particular development area such as project management, communication and negotiation. Employees liaise with the University and Community Managers in their region to find activities or projects to meet their particular development needs.</p>	<p><b>The outputs</b> The branch manager in Botley, Oxford used a community project to develop the organisational, teamworking and communication skills of one of his cashiers. Having assessed the specific development needs a project was chosen, the decoration of bedrooms in a home for patients suffering from Alzheimer's. Taking on the organisation of the whole project, the cashier communicated the plans to the team, set up a rota of volunteers and arranged cover for them. She also contacted local businesses to negotiate very favourable rates for materials and equipment and liaised with the local press for coverage of the event.</p>	<p><b>Key skills developed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased confidence</li> <li>• A noticeable improvement in her specific areas of development – organisation, communication and teambuilding skills. (resulting in an achievement award from the business for her enhanced performance)</li> <li>• The whole teams' morale and motivation improved dramatically</li> </ul> <p><b>For more information contact:</b> Chris Swales, Senior Manager, Community Affairs Email: <a href="mailto:chris.swales@barclays.co.uk">chris.swales@barclays.co.uk</a></p>

case studies		
<p><b>Scottish Power</b> <i>School to work programme</i></p> <p><b>The programme</b> ScottishPower Learning's School to Work Programme is designed to assess pupils' core employability skills from a business perspective, provide realistic feedback to pupils on their current skill levels and produce an individually tailored training plan for each pupil.</p>	<p><b>The outputs</b> Through volunteering on the programme, Scottish Power staff can reinforce the skills they already have, and apply recently acquired skills. Those staff who need to develop a range of skills can do so in a real life environment which complements classroom delivered training.</p>	<p><b>Key skills developed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competence in running Assessment Centre</li> <li>• Coaching and mentoring</li> <li>• Leadership and communication</li> <li>• Recruitment and selection</li> <li>• Giving positive and negative feedback</li> <li>• Interview skills</li> </ul> <p><b>For more information contact:</b> Paul McKelvie Tel: 0141 636 4511 Email: <a href="mailto:paul.mckelvie@scottishpower.com">paul.mckelvie@scottishpower.com</a></p>

case studies		
<p><b>Thames Water</b> <i>graduate trainees on a mission</i></p> <p><b>The programme</b> Thirty-one Thames Water graduate trainees spent 2 days of their induction undergoing 'Mission Possible'. They were given a budget of £350 and 48 hours to transform a children's playground by building a porch, laying a patio and stepping stones, painting the perimeter fencing and designing and painting</p>	<p>murals. They also secured donations of a fax and printer and pledges of cash.</p> <p><b>Key skills developed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building team spirit, developing creativity and problem solving skills</li> <li>• Creating networks and developing networking skills</li> <li>• Developing competencies of planning, organising, influencing and communication.</li> </ul> <p>Community linked projects are now an</p>	<p>integral part of the graduate development programme.</p> <p><b>For more information contact:</b> Paul Bartlett Tel: 0118 373 8941 Email: <a href="mailto:paul.bartlett@thameswater.co.uk">paul.bartlett@thameswater.co.uk</a></p>

case studies		
<p><b>Bain and Co</b></p> <p><b>The programme</b> In 2001, 70% of Bain and Co's employees developed their skills through a variety of community activities. As one employee said <i>"Pro-bono assignments gave me development opportunities that I would never have had on a typical client case."</i></p>	<p><b>The outputs</b> Mr Kotacha a Manager at Bain was given a leave of absence to work as the temporary Managing Director of Capital Cares, the employee volunteering initiative. <i>"It was an invaluable opportunity to broaden my skill set,"</i> says Mr Kotacha. <i>"I learnt a lot about managing people and managing change. I was knocking on doors and responsible for the entire sales process from beginning to end"</i>.</p>	<p><b>Key skills developed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People and change management</li> <li>• Marketing and sales</li> <li>• Presentation skills</li> </ul> <p><b>For more information contact:</b> Laura Howard Tel: 020 7969 6304 Email: <a href="mailto:laura.howard@bain.com">laura.howard@bain.com</a></p>

## top tips

From the case studies some common points emerge in respect of skills development in the community:

- Identify objectives for the individuals and for the business. Ensure the objectives are well defined and communicated to all in the management chain
- Consider the different employee community involvement options available
- Look at the experiences of others
- Ensure full support for any activity launched
- Integrate with mainstream systems for human resource management and establish links with the company's appraisal process
- Safeguard the voluntary nature of the assignments, being careful not to intrude on private volunteering.
- Keep it simple

## Useful contacts and further information

[www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk) Business in the Community's website includes information on employee community involvement, case studies from the Awards for Excellence and the Cares initiative.

**Cares** (a Business in the Community initiative) is a vehicle for employers to support their employees to volunteer in the communities where they operate, addressing local community needs and supporting strategic business issues. Cares provides training and advice for both corporate and voluntary sector partners. Contact [amanda.jones@bitc.org.uk](mailto:amanda.jones@bitc.org.uk) or visit [www.bitccares.org.uk](http://www.bitccares.org.uk).

[www.iblf.org](http://www.iblf.org) The Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF) in partnership with Business in the Community and a coalition of strategic NGOs are running Engage, a global campaign that aims to increase the quality and extent of employee engagement in the development of healthy and sustainable communities. Contact [Amanda.bowman@iblf.org](mailto:Amanda.bowman@iblf.org) or visit [www.iblf.org/engage](http://www.iblf.org/engage)

[www.communitymark.org.uk](http://www.communitymark.org.uk) A BITC initiative for small and medium sized companies to reward and recognise their community involvement.

[www.cecile.net](http://www.cecile.net) CECILE is a network of organisations across Europe who can work with companies to develop their community involvement. The network is co-ordinated by Business in the Community and has partner organisations in every country in Western Europe.

[www.cafonline.org](http://www.cafonline.org) The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) provides financial services to support charitable activity. CAF offers services to companies both in the UK and worldwide on all aspects of charitable giving and community involvement.

[www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) A central online database of volunteer opportunities where people can search for vacancies relevant to their interests and location.

[www.employeevolunteering.org.uk](http://www.employeevolunteering.org.uk) This website is administered by the National Centre for Volunteering, and funded by the Home Office Active Communities Unit to be a comprehensive resource on employee volunteering for companies and individuals.

[www.vde.org.uk](http://www.vde.org.uk) The website of Volunteer Development England – supporting, promoting and developing volunteering through volunteer bureaux.

[www.timebank.org.uk](http://www.timebank.org.uk) TimeBank is a high profile national campaign to raise the awareness of the value of giving time and inspire a new generation of volunteers.

[www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk) The National Volunteering Centre is an organisation that works to promote excellence in volunteering in England