



## **A Civic Engagement Campaign to Build Our Workplace Community**

Only 21 percent of US citizens believe our country is headed in the right direction. News coverage keeps us more informed than ever before about happenings around the globe, while social media gives us a platform to state our opinion and argue our point of view. However, our Democracy is a complex system not designed to address individual (mostly virtual) demand, nor will it ever be.

Moreover, voter participation is at an all-time low in the United States. In fact, the U.S. ranks 31<sup>st</sup> out of 35 countries for voter turnout, with only 53 percent of eligible voters casting their vote in 2012. Many cite systematic barriers to participation, such as lack of civic education, election schedule conflicts, voter registration obstacles, and so on.

As a result, instead of a growing sense of community, connectivity, and collaboration, we more often feel disenfranchised, disenchanting, and disengaged.

Civic engagement, specifically participation in the political process through exercising one's right to vote, is the key to fostering a sense of community and a shared responsibility in societal outcomes. It is incumbent upon us to identify solutions to rectify these perceived or real barriers to voter participation and general civic engagement.

**#WeThePeople** is a private-sector initiative, aiming to build a sense of community in our workplace, implementing a civic engagement program with a few simple steps:

- Communicate voter registration information/deadlines to employees
- Host voter registration drives onsite
- Encourage 2-hour grace period on Election Day (arrive 2 hours late, leave 2 hours early)
- Extend volunteer opportunities to work at polls on Election Day

If implemented, the benefits for employers would inevitably include the following:

- Foster a more involved citizenry
- Build a community within business
- Make jobs more satisfying
- Enhance a shared, engaged culture