

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

When thinking about becoming involved (or more involved) in your community you should consider:

- your particular community interests and those of your company and its employees
- if the company has a logical link to a particular community activity, eg. something related to your business activities
- what you/your company can offer the community – knowledge, skills and other resources (see [50 Ways to Support Your Community](#))
- what the community needs and wants
- what groups you might be able to help or work in partnership with
- the pros and cons of becoming involved with certain community groups.

You may already know about particular issues in the community in which you or your company could become involved. If you know about local groups which are involved in these issues you can contact them directly.

If you are not aware of the important issues in your community, there is a range of ways that you can find out what they are.

Reading the local newspapers is a good way of keeping abreast of what is happening in your community. Local newspapers have sections where local groups submit information about their upcoming activities, including contact telephone numbers.

Contacting your local council's community services section for information is another way. Keep in mind that most people in the know that you speak to will not know everything about your community, so it may be a good idea to speak to a range of people from different organisations.

Information About Community Groups

To find out basic information about local community groups, including their contact details, have a look at the community service directories in your community:

- City of Frankston – [Community Directory](http://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/commdir/) <http://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/commdir/>
- Mornington Peninsula Shire – [Community Information Directory](http://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/CommDir/) <http://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/CommDir/>

Not all community groups, however, appear in the directories, only those which have submitted their information.

Making Contact

When you contact a community group, you should keep in mind the following:

- It is important to speak to the right person in the organisation. Most often this will be the manager or co-ordinator. Often the first person you speak to on the telephone may not have a 'big-picture' view of the organisation and as a result may not be able to respond to your enquiry satisfactorily.
- Many community groups will think that involvement with your company will involve a donation of money. If you do not intend to donate money, you should tell them this and indicate the other ways that your company may be able to assist them (see [50 Ways to Support Your Community](#)).

Don't Be Put Off

If a group does not respond positively your enquiry, do not be put off. Try another organisation.

You may need a number of contacts with a particular community group before working something out with them. It's no different from forming a relationship with another person or company. It will take time to work out the details, including checking out their compatibility.

Working Agreement

When you come to a satisfactory arrangement with a community group, you may want to have a document which serves as a reminder of what each of you has agreed to do. In some instances, a letter may suffice, but in other instances where the arrangement is complicated or involves you making a donation of money or goods to the group, a more formal and documented working agreement may be worth considering. If the arrangement involves a large amount of money, you may want to consider a legally drawn-up document, but in most instances a simply-worded page or two will do.

Solving Problems

From time to time, problems may arise in the arrangements between your company and a community group. In most instances, probably they will be about minor issues related to miscommunication and they will be sorted out without too much fuss. It is best to get on to any problems quickly rather than let them get out of hand.

Most community groups are pretty easy to get along with and if you are able to build a good relationship with a group over time it will be a rewarding experience for both of you.