



When Giving Back Pays Off In and Out of the Workplace

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Source: Mike Jennings, VP UK Operations, FLEETCOR

After I lost two close friends to suicide during the pandemic lockdown, I knew I had to do something. I love hiking, and I love helping people, so I decided to combine the two and started the Hike with Mike Foundation. We organise hikes to raise money and awareness to help people in crisis.

Through donations and corporate sponsorships, the foundation pays for six counseling sessions for anyone in crisis who can't wait the roughly six months it takes for the public health system to respond.

Joined by thousands of supporters, we have hiked over 10,000 kilometers, funding more than 500 hours of therapy. Recently we became an official registered charity with the UK government charity commission. We've drawn the attention of the BBC (twice) and entertainer Ed Sheeran, and a knit hat with our logo made it to the top of Mount Everest.

We also received attention from my FLEETCOR family, when the latest quarterly FLEETCOR News Brief featured the Hike with Mike Foundation in its coverage. You can [watch an expanded version of that interview here](#).

A Culture of Giving

I appreciate the culture of giving back that FLEETCOR fosters. For example, FLEETCOR employees each receive paid time off each year to volunteer their time assisting approved organisations. In fact, FLEETCOR employees conquered the "Yorkshire Three Peaks," raising over £2,000 for the foundation using one of their volunteering days.

FLEETCOR believes in improving areas where we operate, but also fostering a healthy workplace environment that encourages employees to support their colleagues.

My experience with the Hike with Mike Foundation has also helped me in my role overseeing FLEETCOR teams in the UK. I am more acutely aware that people perform better when they feel safe, settled, and wanted. So, it's essential that leadership and their teams have open communication to get the most from each other. I've also learned that a smile can be the most frightening thing in the world because it can hide so much. We must all check up on our colleagues to make sure they are okay.

It's my greatest hope that in the future we don't need the Hike with Mike Foundation anymore because the needs of those in crisis are being served. Until then, I am grateful for the support the foundation has received, including from my FLEETCOR family.