Responsible Business

Good corporate citizens shine

Many companies, however, insist on business cases for sustainability programmes.

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Responsible Business

Enthusiasm may wane as companies pursue growth

Commitment The number of leaders who think CSR very important has fallen, writes Elaine Moore

A s economies make matters state, their efforts that out of the financial crisis may be more focused on questions of wider key over who is benefitting most from the global economic recovery. This has particularly been the case in the UK, where the financial crisis has had a profound impact on businesses and their approach to CSR (corporate social responsibility).

The global financial crisis of 2008-2009 led to a wave of businesses expressing support for the idea of corporate social responsibility (CSR). This support was driven by a number of factors, including the need to address social and environmental issues, the desire to improve transparency, and the recognition that CSR was crucial for business success.

However, in recent years, there has been a decrease in the enthusiasm for CSR among businesses. This has been partly due to economic pressures, as businesses have had to focus on short-term survival rather than long-term sustainability. In addition, some businesses have been criticized for not following through on their CSR commitments.

Despite this, there are still many businesses that are committed to CSR. These businesses recognize the importance of balancing economic, social, and environmental considerations in their operations. They understand that CSR is not just a matter of doing the right thing, but also of doing well.

The future of CSR will depend on a number of factors, including the economic climate, regulatory changes, and stakeholder expectations. Businesses will need to continue to adapt and evolve in order to meet these challenges, while also recognizing the importance of addressing the needs of all stakeholders.
Making good work pay becomes next big imperative

Accounting Social investments that may not bring returns for years are gaining ground. By Kaye Wiggins

F rom policies on sustainable fishing projects to biodiversity efforts, companies are investing in social causes in order to encourage change. But not all this activity is driven by a desire to make a difference. The retail giant Marks and Spencer, with its plan A, a corporate social responsibility programme, uses sustainability to demonstrate its financial performance. The company’s chief executive, Marc Bolland, made the case for sustainability in financial terms, not least because the company has seen a 20 per cent increase in its brand value over the past few years.

We should not expect such a clear-cut case of the time being money. But research conducted in 2013 has shown that responsible business practices can demonstrate both financial and non-financial returns for years.

The London Benchmarking Group, which measures companies’ contributions, found nearly a third of community investment by UK companies recognised as achieving CSR aims. A report by the International Corporate Reporting Council identified that the cost of poor reputation can be high, with a low share price, increased borrowing costs and ultimately a loss of business. So if businesses are using core skills to develop products and services that bring both financial and non-financial returns, it is not always a persuasive effect.

Some effects of CSR programmes have not been measured in financial terms. But rather than being seen as an expensive distraction from the bottom line, they can increase revenue and profits.

M&S has developed its own methods. In the past few weeks, Barclays, for example, has invested £25m in a sustainable fishing project in Orkney. The bank has thrust today’s environmental issues at the centre of its business. “We couldn’t have produced that business without it,” says Mr Rogers. “It has this power and influence, and it’s not top of their agenda,” says Mr Rogers. “We’ve been looking at this for years. We’re thinking about the world around us. Things have changed in the past few years. Some of the things we’re thinking about are how we will expand the business over 20 years through social change. Some of these things we’ve decided to clarify.”

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leading the way in responsible Business

The new form of CSR is springing up that links sustainability with business. This is how you succeed in the business world.

The Sponsors of the Business in the Community’s Responsible Business Awards enable us to identify and celebrate the inspirational best practice in business, in turn creating a vibrant network of businesses as a force for good.

www.bitc.org.uk
Easiest ever: the people I've helped, from the doctors to the organisations to the businesses, now see mental health in a different way and want to do something about it.

But there is an underlying tension in the system: it's not easy to make mental health a priority. As Anne says, there is a lack of evidence, a lack of resources, and a lack of support. And yet, she believes, it's time to change that. It's time to make mental health a priority for everyone, from individuals to organisations to businesses.

So what can we do?

Firstly, we need to make sure that mental health is part of everyone's lives. This means ensuring that mental health is covered in curriculum and training programmes. It means ensuring that mental health services are accessible and affordable. And it means ensuring that mental health is talked about and valued.

Secondly, we need to break down the stigma surrounding mental health. This means ensuring that people feel comfortable talking about their mental health. It means ensuring that people feel comfortable seeking help when they need it. And it means ensuring that people feel comfortable supporting others who are experiencing mental health issues.

Thirdly, we need to invest in mental health. This means ensuring that mental health services have the resources they need to be effective. It means ensuring that mental health research is supported. And it means ensuring that mental health is included in national and international policy decisions.

Finally, we need to ensure that mental health is a priority for all organisations and businesses. This means ensuring that mental health is included in organisational policies and procedures. It means ensuring that mental health is part of organisational training programmes. And it means ensuring that mental health is part of organisational decision-making.

In conclusion, making mental health a priority is not easy. But it is necessary. And it is possible. With the right resources, support, and commitment, we can all work together to make mental health a priority for everyone.
Big Ticks – Companies – Small and large – that can demonstrate a make a difference in society

The Big Ticks are the first level of recognition firm have volunteered to hand out food to vulnerable children during school holidays as part of its “Fun in the Sun” initiative. The initiative, which has gathered pace in recent years and is supported by the Big Tick Trust, awards have been launched to highlight the achievements of medium-sized businesses.

The Big Ticks are the first level of the overall Responsible Business Awards, with the next level being the Big Ticks. The Big Ticks are awarded to companies whose programmes are sustainable practices, and are recognized as having made a positive impact on the local community.

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Working for a better tomorrow

Congratulations to these Big Tick companies for demonstrating significant achievement in tackling key social and environmental issues.

Read their inspirational stories at:

www.bitc.org.uk/awardstories