

Corporate *Sincere* Responsibility



By [Su-Mari du Bruyn](#)

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There is always some unpalatable job in any business that needs to be done in order to keep the wheels turning. It is a job generally characterised by no one noticing when it is being done right, but with absolutely everyone complaining the moment that things go wrong.

Take an example from your own home - it is very likely that you do not get a sincere thank you every time you take out the trash, but I guarantee you that it will not even take a full month for people to notice and start commenting on the stench if you suddenly stop performing that task. The question then becomes - how do you get someone to care about performing these tasks with pride and vigour? How do you get them to come to work excited and ignited every day, despite the prospect of a repetitive task? We are often asked these questions.

One way of addressing this is by helping them to understand how they add value to your business and how your business is doing something worthwhile in this world. If your business is manufacturing screws, you may not necessarily be able to make that connection easily for them purely based on your core business. However, if your screw manufacturing business is also very active in the community (maybe by sponsoring bursaries to the children of your employees), those employees may suddenly have a whole different view of your business. This is when you stop being just an employer, but a cause in which they can believe, to which they gladly dedicate themselves, to which they become loyal and a cause they want to defend. This is one way of making them proud to be working with you and to show them that you care about more than just the bottom line.

Do it for the right reasons

Corporate social responsibility activities do not have to cost you an arm and a leg, but they do have to be rooted in sincerity. You have to be doing the right thing for the right reasons. You can put recycling bins out at the office and educate people about recycling - this will cost you very little (in fact it may even help you make some money which in return can be donated), but it is an action which supports protecting the environment. Putting out a box in winter to collect clothing donations or blanket donations from employees to donate to a worthwhile cause in the local community, will cost you very little, but can help people feel like they are also in their own way contributing to making a positive difference. Maybe instead of maintaining a flowerbed you can maintain a vegetable garden and use the produce to provide meals regularly for your employees at the office.

Paying it forward and giving back to the community in which you operate is the right thing to do. Get involved and make a difference. Investigate to see if there are other businesses in the area with which you can partner and collaborate. Not only on community projects, but also to the benefit of both your businesses. Whatever you choose to do, don't just write a big fat

cheque for a charity in an area far away from where you operate purely for the PR value or the tax write off. Do not treat your corporate social responsibility activities merely as a task to complete in your annual calendar. Rather write that cheque for the local school where the majority of your employees send their children. Give with heart, give with sincerity and start there where you are, in the community where you operate and where your employees live. Corporate Sincere Responsibility really can make a big difference to the size of the space you occupy in the hearts of your employees.

ABOUT SU-MARI DU BRUYN

Su-Mari Du Bruyn is co-founder of the company Adapt To Change. She is a qualified HR practitioner and logistics specialist and is passionate about Continuous Improvement and people development.

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