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The Value of Values in Corporate Social Responsibility

***Why getting it right is
REALLY important***

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How engaged are you and your employees?

If you want to implement Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in your organisation, it is essential that you and your employees are completely engaged in every aspect of the process. But how engaged are your employees right now? You may consider such a question impossible to answer, but the truth is, you need to know this if you want a more profitable, ethical organization, as everyone must share the same values to make the changes genuine.

The good news is that it's perfectly possible to illuminate and measure the values of your organization in order to best implement CSR.

The current state of employee engagement

A survey of over 11,000 individuals from North America, India, Europe, Southeast Asia, Australia/New Zealand, and China was carried out by the research organisation, BlessingWhite into employee engagement. This *Employee Engagement* report captured responses from HR leaders, business leaders and online surveys.

The results are pretty alarming:

- Fewer than 1 in 3 employees worldwide (31%) are engaged.
- Nearly 1 in 5 (17%) are actually Disengaged. Engagement levels vary by region from 37% in India to 17% in China.
- Engagement levels around the world remained roughly stable when comparing early 2008 with mid-2010.
- More employees are looking for new opportunities outside their organization.
- There is a strong correlation between engagement levels and age, role/level, and tenure in the organization.
- Engaged employees plan to stay for what they give; the Disengaged stay for what they get.
- Employees view opportunities to apply their talents, career development, and training as top drivers of job satisfaction.
- Trust in executives can have more than twice the impact on engagement levels than trust in immediate managers does.
- Managers are not necessarily doing the things that matter most.
- Executives appear to struggle with key leadership behaviors correlated to engagement. Findings suggest executive behaviors can have a greater potential impact on engagement than manager actions.
- Executives aren't getting the basics of performance right.
- Engagement surveys without visible follow-up action may actually decrease engagement levels.



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The implication is almost half of employees are somewhere between engaged and not engaged.

Why is there such a disconnect?

The culture of an organisation or any group of individuals is a reflection of the values, beliefs and behaviours of the leaders of the group.

If you're a leader, and you are exhibiting values that are not congruent with the culture of your organisation, you create a disconnect. The same is true if you are an employee. If such a culture is allowed to develop in your organization, affecting real change will be extremely difficult.

Beliefs, Behaviours and Values. What's the Difference?

Beliefs: Opinions, doctrines or principles held as being true by a person or group of individuals.

Behaviours: The outward manifestation of beliefs. Behaviours reflect consciously or unconsciously held beliefs.

Values: A shorthand method for classifying beliefs and behaviours which an individual or group of individuals consider important.

Values are a concept. They don't actually exist, until you give them a real context. A Western European and an Australian Aborigine have very different beliefs and behaviours regarding the food they eat. The value however, is the same: nutrition.

Organisations don't transform. People do.

Richard Barrett, creator of the corporate transformation tools, states:

“Organisations do not transform unless the people at the top of the organisation adopt new values and change their behaviours. The organisational culture reflects the personality of the current leadership and the legacy of personalities of its previous leaders.”

Therein lies our challenge (or opportunity, depending on how full your glass is).

This is part of the barrier we must break through when embedding CSR into our organisation's DNA.



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The other is around measurement. How many times have we heard (or even used ourselves) the old adage: “If you can measure it, you can manage it.”

So in a very pragmatic sense, we have to be able to ascertain where our organisation’s leaders are in the process of transforming, and how we can measure the impact and pace of any change.

Enter Abraham Maslow, with his Hierarchy of Needs, and more recently, Richard Barrett with an extension of these, which we can use for our own CSR benefits.

The Hierarchy of Needs



Abraham Maslow organised human needs into a hierarchy, ranging from those essential needs, which must be met at the bottom, to those that are vital for personal growth and motivation at the very tip. Richard Barrett’s work has seen the expansion of the tip of Maslow’s hierarchy (Self-actualisation) into multiple levels. The name ‘hierarchy of needs’ has been substituted for ‘states of consciousness’ and each state of consciousness is defined by a specific set of values.

You will notice from the model above a certain number of attributes that, if given excessive focus, have a negative return. Also, you will note, that it is not until we reach level 4 that



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the individual or organisation is ready to transform. The ideal is a spread across all of the levels. A commercial organisation, in order to survive, has to have financial stability to remain in business, while a charity or NGO requires financial stability, say from acquiring donations, in order to carry out the higher-level (5, 6, and 7) activities that define it.

What about the CSR Vision?

By now you will have seen the need for a congruency between leaders and the culture of their organisation. Without this, there is a disconnection. This disconnection would impact the adoption of your CSR vision by your employees. It is akin to building a home on sand. Remember, level 4 is the level at which transformation takes place.

The first stage is to get the vision right. The next is to understand your communication style, (Voice) and that of your peers, colleagues and stakeholders. This allows the most effective communication of your vision, to an engaged audience, in a language they understand.

We'll look at Voice in an upcoming article.

For a free half hour 'business break through' coaching session drop us a line [here](#)

Until next time, good luck pushing the CSR agenda forward and building a better, more ethical business.

Best wishes



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About the author

Jim Craig is former head of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainability at Sun Microsystems Ltd. Jim formed greengauges in November 2010, and wrote “5 Steps To Profit From Corporate Social Responsibility, Business Growth By Being A Better Business”.



In this unique guide, Jim demystifies Corporate Social Responsibility, explaining how if approached correctly, it can prove to be beneficial for businesses, rather than a costly chore.

It's available FREE from here www.greengauges.eu/5steps, as both a digital download and paperback copy.

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About greengauges

At greengauges, our goal is to create more sustainable and ethical businesses, which attract and retain the best employees, clients and investors. To do this, we will...

- Illuminate our clients' values.
- Ignite their voices, dramatically improving their communication abilities.
- Enable their vision, to travel like lightning. Leaving them and their stakeholders feeling inspired.

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