Harness the power of giving
How leaders can give and benefit, in Be A Leader.
Pg 7

Consider these pointers if you are interested in working for an NGO.
Pg 02

Books to Charity and a journey of self improvement, with Dr Peggy Wong of Living Hope
Pg 06

A new perspective on the way companies view CSR and why it is important
Pg 08

NGOs or Corporations?
Learn from the people who worked in both fields. Pages 4–5
A boy stared hard in amusement and curiosity at the $2 New Zealand gold coin in his hands. His aunty had given it to him, knowing that he was an avid coin collector. He stood in his room admiring the engraving of the kiwi bird on the back side of the coin, when his mother called him out loudly for him to come down for dinner.

Quite startled by the sudden noise, the coin slipped out of his hands and rolled on the floor until it settled somewhere in his room. Convinced that it had rolled under the bed, he immediately looked there. He even removed all the boxes stored under the bed to try to find it.

His rollerblades, badminton racquet and box of old clothes were all taken out in case the coin might have been hiding under them. No luck. Disappointed, he went to sleep. In the morning, as he was walking out of his room to head to the bathroom, he found something shiny right by the door.

It was the coin he had been looking for. He was so convinced that the only place the coin could have rolled was under the bed that he didn’t even bother to look by the door.

It’s a simple story about focus, presumptions and the importance of taking into account all possibilities before deciding on a course of action. If the boy had considered from the beginning that the coin could have rolled in any area in the front half of the room, he might have found what he was looking for much earlier.

Are we like this about our careers, I wonder? Do we have tunnel-vision and assume we can only work in one particular sector, without considering the possibility that we may find fulfillment and satisfaction elsewhere?

Different organisations and sectors demand different things of us, and have their unique dynamics.

When I was still studying, I made it a point to get experience in as many areas as I could, so that I would be able to make better career decisions when I completed my studies.

In NGOs, I felt deeply connected to the cause of the organisation. In my time at World Vision NZ, I got to understand the intricacies of the child sponsorship structure. I worked with people who were passionate, and who regarded the children they were seeking sponsors for like they were their very own.

At large corporate organisations, I valued the sophistication of their brand. The processes were rigorous and there was exposure to an impressive network of people and companies.

However, satisfaction came for me in both arenas, just in different ways. The important thing, at the end of the day, was that I realised there was a possibility to pursue a career in both the for-profit and the non-profit field. It was my enjoyment of both worlds that led me to Leaderonomics, a social enterprise.

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Awareness of possibilities and a wide perspective are great things to have. For this reason, this week’s career guide shines the spotlight on careers in Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

There are countless individuals in the thousands of NGOs in Malaysia who enjoy what they do and find tremendous fulfillment in their work.

Our centrepages spread compare what it is like working for a corporate organisation versus a NGO. In My First Job, we interviewed Dr Peggy Wong, founder of Living Hope to understand her remarkable journey that has led her to where she is today.

On page 8 is a great read by Amanda Chua, Do Good’s development director, who asks the valid question of why community development is perceived only as a non-profit initiative.

I hope you enjoy this week’s pages. Do give us your feedback on our new structure at mystarjob@leaderonomics.com. We always appreciate your messages.

Enjoy the rest of your weekend. Come Monday, dig deep and keep moving forward.

Until next Saturday.

LILY CHEAH
Editor, myStarjob.com

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**NGO DEFINITION**

Although there is no generally accepted definition of an NGO, the UNESCO Encyclopaedia of Life Support Systems (EOLSS) describes non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as “independent voluntary associations of people acting together on a continuous basis, for some common purpose, other than achieving government office, making money or illegal activities.”

The term NGO was officially used for the first time in the United Nations Charter in 1945.

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**INDIA**

India has one of the largest number of NGOs and non-profit organisations in the world. According to a 2008 study by the Indian government, there are at least 3.3 million. That is more than one NGO for every 400 Indians.

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**MALAYSIA**

The oldest and largest membership-based environmental NGO in Malaysia is the Malaysian Nature Society, which has been in operation since 1940.

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**WORD OF THE WEEK**

**VITIATE**

vi/ti/ate [vee-shi-ate] Verb

To impair the quality of, make invalid, spoil.

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**VITAL!:** My First Job: Dr Peggy Wong to Leaderonomics

**THERE WAS A POSSIBLITY TO PURSUE A CAREER IN BOTH THE FOR-PROFIT AND THE NON-PROFIT FIELD.**

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**CAREER TIPS**

**THINKING ABOUT WORKING FOR AN NGO?**

- **IDENTIFY THE RIGHT ORGANISATION TO WORK FOR**
  
  There are thousands of NGOs registered in Malaysia, each dedicated to a different cause. Some NGOs might even address the same issues but have differing focus areas. Filter your selection by identifying what you are most passionate about.

- **BE REALISTIC ABOUT MONEY**
  
  Although money isn’t everything, bear in mind that NGOs are usually non-profit. As a result, your salary may not be on par with a corporate salary. However, rewards and success mean different things to different people. So be clear why it is that you want to work for an NGO.

- **GET SOME EXPERIENCE**
  
  Volunteer at an NGO that works for a cause you are interested in, maybe a few hours a week, or for a short-term on a full-time basis. This is useful to get hands-on experience, to understand what the nature of work is like, and will help you secure employment down the road.

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**Operations Hydrocarbon & Energy Department**

- **HC&E-Hydrocarbons**
  - Operations Production Assistant Superintendent
  - Operations Production Engineer IV
  - Operations Shift Foreman
  - Outside Operator I
  - Gas Station Operator
  - Operation Technical Advisor

- **HC&E-Aromatics**
  - Activity Coordinator
  - Operation Production Coordinator
  - Operation Technical Advisor
  - Console Operator

- **HC&E-Boilers**
  - Operations Production Assistant Superintendent

- **HC&E-Infrastructure & Waste Treatment**
  - Operations Production Assistant Supervisor
  - Console Operator I, II
  - Maintenance Technician II
  - Senior Maintenance Technician

- **HC&E-Power**
  - Outside Operator I
  - HC&E
  - Site Shift Supervisor

- **Plastics (Elastomers)**
  - Production Assistant Superintendent
  - Outside Operator

- **Plastics (LOPE)**
  - Production Assistant Superintendent

- **Plastics (Solution PE)**
  - Production Assistant Superintendent
  - Technical Advisor

**Mech Tech Focal Points**
- Mechanical Tech
- Perf Supp
- Maintenance CMMS Support Tech I
- Maintenance St. CMMS Support Tech
- Maintenance Planner II
- Quality Analyst II

**Planning**
- Maintenance Engineer I
- Operating Discipline Technician I

**Planning-Project**
- Project Execution Leader
- Maintenance Projects Foreman
- Maintenance Planner II
- Maintenance Scheduler I
- Maintenance Trainer
- Maintenance Engineer I
- Welding Specialist
- Senior Project IEA Maintenance Tech

**Mat-IC**
- Inventory Control Leader

**Mat-Services**
- Senior Contract Administrator
- Maintenance Trainer

**Mat-W/H**
- Warehouse & Marshalling Leader

**Mat-MatStand**
- Standardization Engineer II
- Parts Reverse Engineering Coordinator

**S&S**
- Maintenance Engineer I
- Shops and Services Superintendent

**S&S-RV**
- Instrument / Digital Technician I
- Senior Pipeliner
- Maintenance Trainer
- Mechanical Shop Lead Engineer

**S&S-MechShop**
- Machinist II
- Maintenance Trainer
- Supervisor Machine Tool Operator

**S&S-MetFab**
- Boilermaker I
- Senior Boilermaker
- Welder / Fabricator I
- Metal Fab Shop Lead Engineer

**S&S-MobEq**
- Rigger I, II
- Senior Rigger

**S&S-RelEq**
- Maintenance Trainer
- Millwright I

**S&S-IEA**
- Maintenance Foreman
- Maintenance Trainer
- Instrument / Digital Technician I, II
- Electrical Maintenance Engineer I
- IEA Shop & Services Supervisor
- Maintenance Engineer II

**HC&E-Infrastructure & Waste Treatment**
- Instrument / Digital Technician I
- Maintenance Trainer

**HC&E-SS**
- Operating Discipline Technician I
- Material Coordinator I

**Planning-P&S**
- Maintenance Scheduler I, II
- Maintenance Planner II
- Maintenance Trainer

**Planning-T/A**
- Maintenance Scheduler I
- Maintenance Turnaround Foreman

**Process Automation**
- Digital Technician
- M&G Application Engineer

**Technical Support**
- Civil & Structural Engineer
- Electrical Engineer
- Instrument Engineer
- Piping Engineer
- Rotating Equipment Engineer

For above positions, email: oildbx10@jviglobal.com

**Engineering Department**

**AI-Project Quality**
- Asset Integrity Engineer II
- Senior Electrical Inspector
- Senior Mechanical Inspector
- Civil Inspector I
- Project Quality Engineer II,III,IV

**AI-PI**
- Mechanical Inspector I
- Supervising Inspector I
- Assistant Inspector II
- Senior Civil Inspector
- NDI Technician

**Asset Integrity**
- NDI Technician I, II
- Supervising Inspector I, II
- Assistant Integrity Engineer IV
- Electrical Inspector
- Mechanical Inspector I, II
- NDI Technician

**Analytical Lab**
- Analyst Technician I, II
- Senior Analyst Technician
- Analytical Sciences & Technology
  - Senior Analyst Technician
  - Analytical Sciences & Technology Technician I, II
  - Analyst Engineer II, III
  - Enviro Chemist II, III
  - Lab system Analyst I

**Lab QC**
- Lab shift Tech I
- QC shift Supervisor

For above positions, email: oildbx7@jviglobal.com

**Maintenance Department**

**HC&E-Boilers & Power**
- Maintenance Tech
- Maintenance Trainer

**HC&E-Hydrocarbons**
- Maintenance Engineer I
- Maintenance Trainer
- Millwright I

For above positions, email: oildbx12@jviglobal.com

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To Apply: Please send your CV to the above provided Email IDs, mentioning the department & position being applied for in the subject line of your email. Please also visit www.jerryvarghese.com/jvges to view complete job descriptions.
It is very difficult to get good, young as well as getting staff or enough volunteers is definitely another challenge, handle every situation.

What are the challenges you face?

I am involved in all of the organisation’s activities pertaining to fund rais- ing, staffing, looking after three homes for children who come from traumatic backgrounds, as well as dealing with our clients. What do you do in your current organisation?

My responsibilities include managing the homes, working with potential sponsors, writing proposals, securing funding, counselling our volunteers, connecting with artists, sourcing for potential collaborators, and reporting to the board.

What do you enjoy most about your current job?

I enjoy seeing the children transition and become better as a whole. The wonderful people whom I work with are very passionate about the children’s welfare.

What do you do in your current organisation?

I am responsible for sourcing for potential collaborations, and express their love for the arts, and the impact that the arts have on the lives of those in need. We have a couple of testimonies of students who have been able to make the jump from corporate to NGO. What do you enjoy most in your current job?

I enjoy seeing the children grow up and make a difference in society. As someone who was once a child, I know how the challenges faced by children today are the same as those I faced, in a way, to do the same.

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**Turning Luxury to Charity Using Business Acumen to Help the Needy**

**By Eric Quah**

eric.quah@leaderonomics.com

HAVING a family that runs a business may be “leg up” for individuals with entrepreneurial goals, but Living Hope founder Dr Peggy Wong believes that a person’s background can only take you so far in order to achieve excellence in life, there is much more you have to learn on your own, she says.

Wong was born into a family of astute businessminded and philanthropists. Helping those in need seems to be in her DNA. Her grandfather – a Chinese physician – distributed free medicine to Chinese migrant workers arriving in Malaysia. Her father continued this legacy, giving out medicine to the needy, and helping to build Chinese schools in her home state of Perak.

In May 2007, Wong established Living Hope Global, a foundation to bring awareness to Chinese schools in her home state of Perak. Today, she sits as the chairman for the foundation.

**AN ENTERPRISING FIRST**

Wong’s first venture into the business world began in the 1970s, after graduating in Economics from the University of Malaya (UM) on scholarship.

With the support of the British Council and the American Embassy, she was sent to London for a course on book publishing and distribution. The main purpose was for her to gather enough knowledge and come back to UM and start a cooperative bookshop.

There, she spent three months visiting the universities of Cardiff and Birmingham to learn about book publishing and retailing.

“I had to start a bookshop from scratch but that to me was also very exciting!” she enthuses. “I understood this was something that no one had ever done before.”

After three months, she came back to Malaysia and proceeded to work on opening UM’s first ever bookstore. Feeling daunted initially, she sought out the advice of royal professor Ungku Aziz. Until today, she attributes the success in her first job to him.

**MENTIONABLE MENTOR**

Wong has always held Ungku Aziz in esteem as her supportive mentor and adviser. The concept of the UM Cooperative Book Shop was, after all, her project.

While that period was exhilarating and eye-opening for her, it was also a stressful time. “I was supposed to set up this bookstore without any financial backing whatsoever!” she says.

Putting what she learnt from theory into practice was difficult. Initially, Wong found it a challenge — not because of the prospect of running a business on her own, as this was what she had been exposed to from a young age. She was more anxious about starting a business from scratch, something she had never done before.

With the backing of her mentor she gained the confidence to undertake the task — an instinct she calls entrepreneurship. She remembers those first few months when she struggled to keep the bookstore going. She even went without pay for six months because the society set up to run the shop had not yet been established at that point.

Yet she persevered. She took stock of business skills learnt over the years from the family, her lecturers and her trip to London and she never looked back.

Once the bookstore became financially stable, she knew the sky was the limit. Today, the UM Cooperative Bookshop has become a multi-million dollar business and Wong feels a sense of pride.

It was one of the premier stores in the country stocked with a wide range of hardcover books as well as paperbacks. Until today, it takes orders from students and the public alike, for books unobtainable elsewhere.

**PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY**

Wong is a firm believer in having a positive attitude in all aspects of life, not only for work. “The ability to learn is very important, and so is attitude, because attitude determines your altitude. It shows you how far you can go.”

To her, working hard is only one of the factors that contribute to someone’s success. “That person should also be teachable and he or she should be humble enough to absorb knowledge and information.”

Wong points out that a job is really a situation where someone is paid to learn. In the end, she posits, while the company benefits in revenue, the employee will benefit from the learning process and the mistakes he or she makes.

She believes that a university qualification is good because it provides a structure and foundation for career success.

However, she acknowledges cases where people are successful without a university education and progress through their determination to succeed.

“For me there is no such thing as a career that does not involve some risk. But instead of looking for uncertainties in a new job, we should regard them as opportunities for learning,” she shares.

Wong also does not regard something that has gone wrong as a failure — if something does not work it should be noted, and a change should be made.

**MULTI FACETED**

Although Wong began her career in business within the academic industry, she soon developed a keen interest in fashion; in particular, luxury accessories such as watches and diamonds. “I found this even more enticing because you really end up learning about people and how to ‘handle’ them,” she says.

Her approach to difficult customers is that, while one has to be polite at all times, sometimes you still have to remain firm and stand your ground in calling out the emperor’s new clothes.

After learning all she could from rubbing shoulders with the rich and famous, she changed her tactics and joined American Express where she worked for seven years. “I wanted to be world-class and take my learning to yet another level!” she explains.

Joining American Express reinforced her belief in the importance of interpersonal skills. “At the end of the day it is all about connecting with people, really.”

**CHARITABLE OFFERINGS**

Forever methodical, Wong believes that all the vast knowledge she accumulated in her past was really in preparation for what she is doing today — charity.

Some of her valuable contributions include providing for the World Wildlife Federation, victims of the Kosovo war, old folks’ homes, mentally disabled children, orphans and families of the blind in Malaysia and internationally.

“I feel it is time to pay back for all I have received in the past. And because I meet with different people from different fields, it is good that they could eventually join me and contribute some help.”

In Wong’s view, people today may have a high IQ, but in order to succeed in life, they should also have EQ — the emotional quotient.

Without it, she says, “you will find it difficult to relate to people.”

“Especially with today’s technological advancements and gadgets, people turn to these advancements to do their communications for them, losing that important emotional connection.”

To Wong, this seems to be a loss of touch with humanity, because at the end of the day it is all about interpersonal skills.

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“Today, Wong is also a sought-after public speaker and author of the popular Life’s Little Secrets series of hope, inner peace, love and wisdom. She has also just recently published a book entitled Living a Balanced Life. Through her work with Living Hope Global, she travels extensively throughout Malaysia to meet underprivileged children, understand their plight and bring much needed help in terms of donations that go towards the feeding and education programmes that she has set up. Wong firmly believes that education is the one and only way out of the vicious cycle of poverty.”

“I have no regrets for how my life has unfolded,” Wong beams. “In fact, I could say that it is through divine orchestration that I am where I am today!”
The same can be said of countries. According to a global study by Arvin and Lew, “the statistical evidence from this study therefore suggests that as far as happiness is concerned, it is better to give in a generous way.” Leveraging the World Database of Happiness, this study found that countries which had a direct correlation with happiness whilst aiding did not impact happiness negatively.

Interestingly, it seems to be the same for businesses. Businesses that are primarily focused on enhancing shareholder value (i.e. receiving profits), have unhappy people compared to those that focus on stakeholders (companies that give to their communities). In a recent UK poll, people in large companies have a far higher disposable income than their grand- children, yet are not happy. Unhappy people mean lower productivity and higher healthcare costs.

Most people forget that inspired leadership is more about people than products or profit. People are inspired by organisations and leaders that give in addition to receiving.

History is awash with the value of giving. Christopher Chapman’s 1680 grave in Westminster Abbey reads: “What I gave, I have. What I spent, I had. What I left, I lost by not giving it.” Longfellow wrote, “Give what you have.” Notable author John Bunyan reminds us, “There was a man, though some did count him mad, the more he cast away the more he had.”

Of course there are some who believe they have little to give, and that their gift will make little difference. Stephen Jarislowsky confounds that by saying, “A life not lived for others is not a life!” If anyone truly lived a life ofTORCH (companiesthat give to their communities), have unhappier people compared to those that focus on stakeholders (companies that give to their communities). In a recent UK poll, people in large companies have a far higher disposable income than their grandchildren, yet are not happy. Unhappy people mean lower productivity and higher healthcare costs.

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Leaders sometimes give at great personal cost to themselves. Gandhi lost his life to his cause. So did Martin Luther King. But their leadership legacies live forever.

Today, we have a different form of leadership. A leadership of wanting to receive more and more. The Wall Street Journal suggested that a “cult of greed” was to blame for the recent financial crisis with billionaire investor Stephen Jarislowsky echoing that “extreme greed” was to blame. Even when organisations were falling apart, we read of its leaders receiving more and more. In the movie Wall Street, Gordon Gekko, in his “greed is good” speech, crystallised why receiving is the new leadership mantra. But yet when we explore new research on “legendary leaders,” the following are the top three leadership traits identified:

1. Legendary Leaders seek significance (people) rather than success (profits). They value people – their families, employees, and customers. They make decisions based on the impact to key stakeholders.

2. They serve a purpose rather than achieve results. They resist the pressure for immediate gratification and focus on long-term purpose. They evaluate new products and services on the needs of the marketplace and how they improve the lives of their users.

3. Legendary leaders focus on what “can I give?” rather than “what can’t I get?” They follow a philosophy of abundance. Instead of fighting to get a bigger piece of the pie, they work to make the pie larger.

Reading through the top three traits of legendary leaders, they paint a picture of a giving leader. The opposite of Gordon Gekko in Wall Street. They focus on people, not only on profits, have long-term purpose and bring benefit to society. Interestingly, social enterprises are organisations that focus on significance, ensuring impact to the community and these organisations are creating new markets in the process.

Last year I was invited to be one of the main judges at a reality show from TV3, Sejuta Impian. The show centred on enabling Malaysians to be able to fulfill their dreams, as long as these dreams benefit the community in some way or form. As I watched the 92 finalists come and present their cases for funding, I was inspired by how Malaysians want to impact the community. Most interesting was the mushrooming of social enterprises with a clear social mission and a solid plan of sustainability through profits. More and more organisations today are transforming from “profit-driven” only onto “socially-driven” missions.

GE is moving into green territory with a clear social mission and a solid philosophy. They make decisions based on the greater good of mankind and the community. Giving truly excites your employees and gets them committed to your cause, ensuring higher margins and profitability.

We often hear stories of leaders who jump ship out of their big CEO roles and gravitate towards new roles which have more meaning. It is a strange phenomenon that they all reach a stage in their careers when leaders feel compelled to suddenly “give back.”

Why does it have to be so late in one’s career that giving happens? Giving is simple. Giving is not only providing financial support. The best leaders believe that “you get the best out of others when you give the best of yourself!” and they start giving early in life.

So, how do leaders in business give themselves a greater purpose? Below are three simple ways that each of us can begin the process of giving back.

LISTENING
The greatest courtesy a leader can give is to listen. Everyone wants to be listened to. The problem is most leaders have no time to listen and be an empathetic ear to colleagues, subordinates, suppliers, and customers. You will be surprised by the information and ideas you may receive in exchange for listening.

GIVING FEEDBACK
Courageous leaders know that giving and receiving feedback conversations are needed for inspiring relationships. Seventy per cent of employees feel they receive too little feedback and have too little interaction with their direct manager, with limited positive feedback and constructive feedback offered.

As a leader, I know that the performance appraisal as being a broken process for delivering feedback. I personally struggle with this as it is extremely time consuming, but the more feedback you give, the better your team performs.

DEVELOPING OTHERS
Leadership is not a platform to use people, but to develop them. The legacy of a leader is not one who achieves the most, but one who builds up other great leaders who will accomplish more. If you want to succeed as a leader, focus more on what you can do for others rather than what you expect others to do for you. Teach, coach and mentor your employees. In return, they will outperform for you.

KEEP GIVING
I am going to end this article with a short story on why giving sometimes even gets you out of trouble, especially in the case of poor drivers. A few years ago, an accident took place with a woman’s car crashing into a man’s car. Both cars were wrecked. But amazingly, neither got injured. As they crawled out of their demolished cars, they both counted their blessings and the man asked, “Aren’t you having any?” To which the woman replied, “No, I think I’ll just look at it.”

Giving is limited when you give your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly add value and reap the rewards. As Albert Einstein said, “The value of a man resides in what he gives and not in what he is capable of receiving.” Be a generous leader: keeping giving to your people.

Roshan Thiran is CEO of Leaderonomics, a social enterprise passionate about transforming the nation through giving. If you are interested in giving back to the community or being part of empowering leadership development for underprivileged kids, contact amanda.chua@leaderonomics.com or go to www.leaderonomics.com. Leaderonomics has its very own volunteer website www.dogoodvolunteer.com, where you can “do good” and give.
WHAT IS SHARED VALUE?

Michael Porter, famed Harvard business strategist, surmised that profitable business is the only infinite means for creating societal value, and the most powerful force for addressing the most critical challenges we face. Porter has coined the term “shared value” to define a concept by which companies become more competitive while simultaneously alleviating social problems in communities where they operate.

“Shared value is about tackling societal problems with a capitalist business model. When we can get the activity into the capitalism bucket, we create magic because we can scale,” he says.

CREATING SHARED VALUE

In the past, corporate investment in community and environmental initiatives were often seen as “obligations” or simply philanthropy: added costs that had to be borne to minimise operational risks and protect reputation. Creating Shared Value redefines many of these obligations as opportunities to strengthen the business long-term — adding value for both shareholders and stakeholders.

Creating Shared Value begins with the understanding that for our business to prosper over the long-term, the communities we serve must also prosper. Contrary to traditional thinking, businesses can create competitive advantage and shareholder value through actions that substantially address a social or environmental challenge.

SHARED VALUE AS A DIFFERENTIATION

Historically, companies interacted with society through philanthropy. What started as simple donations to good causes evolved to strategic investment of a business’s greater resources and core competencies to address social or environmental issues — what many call CSR. Porter describes corporate philanthropy and CSR as fundamental building blocks for shared value but “shared value is different because it has the magical property of scalability.” The greatest distinction between shared value and CSR is that shared value is not on the margin of what companies do, but at the centre. It is important to understand these distinctions, because doing so enables us to consider more intelligently the ways businesses can create value for society.

It’s also important to recognise that shared value should not be adopted in the place of CSR, but as a complement. Take the example of Nestlé, the corporate pioneer of the shared value revolution which now invests 80% of its resources towards creating shared value, but without taking away from the historic 20% invested in CSR programmes.

SHINING EXAMPLES

How does this look in practice? It starts with reimagining a needs-based mission statement. Consider Nestlé’s evolution from a F&B to a nutrition and wellness company. We all watched Nike virtuously transcend the apparel and footwear industry to become the face of individual empowerment over personal health and wellness.

Another impressive example is GE’s highly-profitable efforts at addressing environmental issues and challenges in healthcare. Ecomagination and Healthymagination have each generated new products and revenue streams while engaging stakeholders and bolstering capacity for cutting-edge innovation.

But shared value isn’t just about pursuing new business opportunities. It is about partnership collaborations across sectors to tackle local issues. Cisco offers, a great example of the potential for shared value in rallying cross-sector approaches to tackling social challenges like education and job placement for underserved populations.

Through its Networking Academy, Cisco partners with schools, government agencies, non-profit, and other organisations in regions from Brazil to South Africa, leveraging its cloud technology expertise towards providing education and career readiness for students considering high-demand IT careers.

That’s not all. Cisco works with Futures Inc, a talent management software company, to facilitate job opportunities for underserved students and army veterans through their programme. Fifty per cent of them received a job offer within 48 hours.

SHARED VALUE FOR BUSINESSES

Like the examples above, companies should be in the forefront in bringing business and society back together. Yet we still lack an overall framework for guiding these efforts, and most companies remain stuck in a “social responsibility” mindset in which societal issues are at the periphery, not the core.

The solution lies in the principle of shared value. Businesses must recommit to shared company success and economic value with social progress. Shared value is not social responsibility, philanthropy, or even sustainability, but a new way to achieve economic success. We believe that it can give rise to the next major transformation of business thinking. However, our recognition of the transformative power of shared value is still in its genesis. Realising it will require leaders and managers to develop new skills and knowledge — such as a deeper appreciation of societal needs, a greater understanding of the true bases of company productivity, and the ability to collaborate across profit/non-profit boundaries.

BEING GENEROUS WITH DREAMS

The change has to start from somewhere and as Pallotta best sums it, “It is time to change the way we think about changing the world.” Having a tunnel vision of being fixated on costs spent on charity distracts us from what the real cause of changing the world is all about.

Our generation does not want to know how spokespersons are we on social causes. Instead, how generous are we in creating impact “doing good”? It has to first start off with the paradigm shift in the way we think and how we approach “social responsibility.”

So, instead of asking the next non-profit its investment cost, let us ask about the scale of their dreams, the resources they have, and how we can partner to realise them. By having that kind of generosity of thought and not forcing organisations to lower their horizons for keeping their overheads low, we can talk about scale and potential for real change.

Partnership collaborations with non-profits to tackle social issues is the first step. With companies stepping in to lend strength and create shared value, then the non-profits can play a bigger role in making an impact for all who are in great need of it. We can then say that we took part in growing the capacity of changing the world and reinvented the way in changing things.

Amanda Chua is the Do Good director with Leaderonomics, who loves to work with the team to boost the potential for shared values and bring about social change. Do Good Corp. is a new offering by Leaderonomics under the Do Good Volunteer initiative, which partners with organisations to mobilise collective volunteering in the community. The aim is to help companies successfully engage their employees by bringing their CSR and Employee Volunteer programmes to the next level. For more information email amanda.chua@leaderonomics.com

Also next week

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