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## Reputation Building and Corporate Volunteerism Impacts Bottom Line

Reena De Asis, Contributor

Corporations who genuinely have an effective corporate volunteer program often earn a good reputation from stakeholders, media and the general public.

As noted by The State of Corporate Citizenship in the United States 2009, The Hitachi Foundation and Boston College, a good reputation is increasingly linked to bottom line benefits such as improved sales, license to operate, employee morale and productivity, and retention of top talent.

Furthermore, innovative business models have shifted to include corporate volunteer programs to help support core business functions. According to the Corporate Community Outsourcing Employee Volunteer Programs Industry Trends, by 2008 more than 81% of companies incorporated their volunteer programs into the company's overall business plan.

This means that top decision makers are finding business value in the many benefits a corporate volunteer program offers. Good corporate citizenship helps train leaders and impacts the bottom line.

A strategic corporate volunteer program not only gives back to the community but also trains employees to be transformational leaders. Transformational leaders are integral in contributing to the success of a business as they inspire and maximize the human potential of their fellow employees.

For instance, in Shaping the Future: Solving Social Problems through Business Strategy. Pathways to Sustainable Value Creation in 2020 report, IBM sends 500 of its most promising leaders to perform community-driven, economic-development projects in four continents.

The completion of these job-creating projects prepares the company for growth in pre-emerging markets, helps develop high-potential employees and executives to lead, and ensures that IBM's next generation of leaders has well-honed teamwork skills, global awareness, and cultural intelligence. These are all critical ingredients for leadership and sustainable value creation.

Moreover, IBM consistently ranks high as a top CSR global billion dollar company. For over 100 years, the company has integrated corporate citizenship and social responsibility into every aspect of their business. IBM has been included in lists like the World's and America's Most Admired Companies, and the Most Desirable Employer by Undergraduates list. Overall, IBM is reputable, partly because its leaders incorporate doing good as part of their business efforts.

"Likewise, in the 2011 Deloitte Volunteer IMPACT Survey, Evan Hochberg, the leader of Deloitte's community involvement initiative, explains, "Our own experience has demonstrated the business case for Deloitte to invest in a strategic corporate volunteer program. It's very exciting to have research that more broadly quantifies the connection between workplace volunteerism and several drivers of perceptions of positive corporate culture among millennials."

In fact, the 2011 Volunteer IMPACT Survey results reveals that companies that connect the dots between talent and volunteerism have an opportunity to strengthen relationships with young employees. As a result, they will likely be rewarded with happier workers. The more satisfied employees are, the more likely they will remain loyal.

As a result, whether a company is catering to millennials or an older generation for prospective or current employees, one thing is for certain – happy workers who are provided leadership opportunities through volunteering tend to recommend their company to friends, and show more devotion to their companies. Employees are more productive when they are happy and have a positive image of their employer.

All things considered, implementing a corporate volunteer program can help build a favorable reputation, impact bottom line and produce happy employees/consumers.