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## Increasing Employee Engagement: CSR Programs that Soar

Effective Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programming is not just directed outward, making positive change in the world; it also points inward, attracting new talent and allowing them to harness their passions. It results in a sense of employee pride and purpose. Fully integrated, top-down supported CSR programs strengthen employee engagement and improve workplace morale. When CSR is done right, everyone – companies, employees and the world—stand to benefit.

Expectations have evolved. Potential employees want to know that the place they work has a brand and culture that contributes positively to the world around them. Employees want their work to be meaningful. Not content to take a paycheck and go home, top employees increasingly demand to see the impact of their work on the world around them. Many of these employees view their employment not just as a source of income, but as an expression of their deepest values. Meaningful CSR is no longer a “preference” for employers to have – it’s a requirement. They will not accept jobs at companies without a strong CSR program. Others, if they do accept, won’t stay long.

According to a Canadian study conducted by Hewitt Associates, Canada, there are indicators that corporate social responsibility can indeed improve a company’s bottom line, in part by giving the most engaged employees a reason to stay and to work harder.

Top employees also seek opportunities for innovation. Many want their passion to lead them new places, solve problems, and create change. Well-designed CSR programs allow these employees to innovate within the overall mission laid out by company leadership. Campbell Canada’s “Nourish” initiative, for example, which delivers high-nutrient meals to food banks, was born from employees’ existing expertise in product development, production, distribution and marketing. The program is a win-win-win: it reduces hunger, builds Campbell’s reputation, and provided an outlet for “intrapreneurial” innovation, or innovation within the company.

At OTM Partners, we specialize in the development and management of nationally branded communications programs with a focus on corporate social responsibility campaigns.

Blending creativity with craft, we transform challenges into opportunities and objectives into outcomes.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is our business. Our award-winning team of CSR strategists has more than two decades of experience in the communications arena, and we understand that effective CSR programs are an essential element for succeeding in the business world today.

Whether you are looking to assess your current CSR efforts or to create a national program from the ground up, OTM Partners is the right team to help you achieve your goals.

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The benefits of an engaged workforce are both economical and reputational. Deeply embedded CSR programs have the ability to increase the following:

- ◆ **Job satisfaction**, which can lead to increased productivity and significant cost savings. A recent study by Dale Carnegie Training and MSW Research shows that companies with engaged, satisfied employees perform better than unengaged employees by up to 202 percent.
- ◆ **Employee retention**, saving money on searches and on-boarding of new hires. The Bureau of National Affairs estimates U.S. businesses lose \$11 billion annually due to employee turnover.
- ◆ **Workplace innovation**, using CSR principles to positively influence core business practices. A study of IBM shows that a CSR program for international volunteering, modeled on the Peace Corps, built knowledge about developing countries and was incorporated into IBM's strategic plan.
- ◆ **Pride** about Company CSR, leading to word-of-mouth improvements in reputation.
- ◆ **"Alumni" relations**, employees who leave your company on good terms are more likely to refer new business back to it.

Corporate Social Responsibility programs can benefit a company before, during, and after an employee's tenure. It is time to think of CSR programs as an integrated value-producing initiative, not just for doing good, but also for attracting and retaining the best employees.

In short, good CSR isn't just good for the world—it can be good for your company. Successful and sustainable CSR programs, like those designed and implemented by OTM Partners, create a shared value and increased employee engagement.