

CCEC Meeting – June 18, 2020

Quick announcements:

- Confirmed dates for next CCEC Virtual Gathering: August 17-19, 2020, 1-5pm EST. Details to follow next week
- Asked for links to CCEC-member COVID-19 response that can be added to Volunteer Canada's COVID resource pages, a way to elevate the leadership of council members.

Discussion: Influencing meaningful corporate responses to emerging events

The public and employees expect companies to react in meaningful ways to arising, hot button social and environmental issues. How can companies provide authentic, impactful and sustained responses? How can Council reps influence corporate reaction within the many complexities, including executive wishes and a cynical public? These and other related issues will be explored during our members-only meeting.

Currently many high-profile topics companies are trying to address: pandemic, unemployment, racism and racial tensions, just to name a few. Who knows what next week will bring?? Ties to concerns raised at Gathering planning meeting: employee engagement/CSR called on to support the company "hero narrative".

Performative allyship is a term for showy actions, done for social media favour. The public and employees are increasingly skeptical of such actions. What does an authentic, impactful, sustained corporate response look like? How do we know it when we see it? What does it feel like?

- It is important to keep the work going after the initial action, it must continue so that the actions match what you are saying. What change have we made since the initial statement?
- Doing more than one thing, taking more than one action.
- ["Corporate Social Justice"](#) - a deep integration into the functions of the organization
- Parallels between the work some companies are doing with Indigenous communities
 - write the cheque, make the statement and then integrate it i.e. internal training for employees to better understand
- "Discovering Imperfectly" - Does not have to start/ be perfect – but be working towards something in a transparent way through
 - employee volunteer opportunities/ experience – teachable moments
 - engage for impact
 - Employee Resource Groups
- But time will tell – THAT is how employees and the public will judge the sincerity of the corporate commitment – what is the company doing with the media focus dies down

What are some barriers – finances, resources – especially during this time, to responding with a sustained, authentic integrated commitment?

- Do we have to choose between causes? How do we choose? Do we have to step away from one partnership to engage in a new one?
- What is our strategic focus? How do we shift in a way that is authentic and inclusive? Where to prioritize/ how to prioritize – priorities are constantly changing

- Internal forces and a public demand for showing up often make it difficult to hold fast to priorities, or result in token gestures

Have CSR departments been engaged in the discussion and planning on this movement to eliminate racism? Were you drawn in and were you done so appropriately?

- One company started with a conversation within their CSR team, a safe space – people who wanted to do something; opened up to a town hall which did not answer many questions; did a different panel focusing on the lived experience of associates – having the greatest impact
 - Lesson: What are your associates saying? Listen to their voices. Collaboration within the company and then find the community partner that is the best fit.
- As a person who does not have that personal experience with racism, how do you provide reporting, leadership, storytelling, data collection? Where does our voice fit into this? How do we allow space for all the voices? Concern about appropriating voice.
- At one company, D&I takes leadership role on some equity/justice issues and engages the appropriate departments – CSR/ HR then activate the plan. As the conversation on racism and racial tensions is a larger scale plan, with more systematic change, many people have to be brought into the conversation.
- Leadership was expected of the CSR team at one company and they jumped right in to confer and then advise.
- At another company, the CSR team has been connecting with local partners to see what is happening in community – only now being brought into the conversation on racism with executives
- One company, through partnership with CSR, is providing a platform for employees to engage and share stories, to have conversations on their internal social media channel - #checkinginonyou – creating a safe space to learn and plan.
 - I care, I want to learn and listen, I want to know how you're doing.
 - tagging colleagues to hear their stories
- A presentation at the Points of Light conference showcased Liberty Mutual encouraging employees to checking in with your neighbour/ colleague as the key community request of employees
 - Lines continue to blur – new, smart ways of being kind and generous beyond traditional volunteering.
 - Many new activities deepen empathy and understanding of the complexities of community, the lives of others

Will this impact how we do business? Who we do business with? What practices do CCEC companies have in place to move employee community experiences into day-to-day work to effect practices and decisions e.g. procurement, hiring practices

- No one on the call could point to any. *What work needs to be done here to integrate corporate community engagement into the company?*
- Discussion on platforms – YourCause, Benevity (Missions)
- Commitments need to extend to employees – empower them, reminding them they are empowered