

December 2009 Topic Discussion - Mentor

With Christmas approaching, I would like to highlight the theme of "giving" albeit from a corporate perspective. From supporting a little league baseball team to sponsoring a national fundraising and awareness campaign like CIBC's "Run for the Cure," organizations make decisions on how they will "give back" to the people who use their products and services. Whether such decisions are made on an ad hoc basis, or form part of a well defined strategy, the resulting choices bring definition to an organization's identity in the community. Corporate philanthropy and community involvement are components of the broader area of corporate social responsibility where organizations, in part, determine how they will utilize profits to support events and causes that align with their core values. This area is not without controversy, however, especially when goals of increased business profits and greater shareholder returns are viewed as being the major objectives of for-profit enterprises.

1) Mentor, discuss how you have been involved in supporting community events or causes through your organization. Describe how your business supports such involvement. Share your perspective on corporate citizenship/social responsibility. What would you identify as being the "social responsibilities" of business, if any?

2) Student, discuss your thoughts about what it means to "give back" to your community. Share some of the causes or areas of interest you are passionate about outside of school life. Discuss with your mentor how those areas could be supported and incorporated into your career goals.

Finally, a blessed Christmas and New Year to you! May we look for opportunities to extend grace and give hope as we honour the birth of the Giver of Life during this season.

Regards,
Doug