

Diversity and the human resource management function: The importance and role of diversity regarding the triple bottom

Introduction

Taking responsibility for the effects of one's business activities is important. Numerous organizations have shown that it is possible and profitable to be responsible for one's activities. Managing diversity in terms of the triple bottom line (3BL) is very important (The Economist, 2009). Initially, corporations frowned at the 3BL. However, after trying the implementation of the concept, most of these corporations have appreciated the unique value the concept adds to the management when properly instituted. The 3BL stands for People, Planet and Profit. The term Triple Bottom line was coined by John Elkington, a co-founder of a consultancy geared towards sustainability. Employing this principle in the management of an organization also enhances the performance of its corporate social responsibility strategy and makes the practices of the organization more environmentally friendly.

The acceptance of 3BL has further been incorporated in business reporting, giving rise to a concept known as Triple Bottom Line reporting. The reporting takes into account the social and environmental impacts of a business in addition to the financial performance. 3BL acknowledges that business is unsustainable if there are no healthy people to serve as staff and good natural environments to sustain the people.

Staples has managed to creatively use the 3BL principle to realize diversity in its management and enhance its human resources. According to Hosni (2010) it has shown that being responsible is as easy as painting its red color trade mark on its ads. For proper Corporate Social Responsibility, Staples adopted the 3BL and made it a priority. The company further coined an alias "Staples Soul" for its CSR efforts. The CSR efforts focus mainly on diversity, community, environment and ethics. All these have been conducted using the ideal of the triple bottom line, and have been greatly successful. The company certainly supports environmental initiatives and encourages every one to do the same. According to its Vice president for environmental affairs, Mr Mark Buckley every company and individual can make a difference and contribute to the protection of the environment. Its CSR strategy has been implemented as follows:

People

The Staples Soul has laid emphasis on the diversity of people, concentrating mostly on diversity in terms of culture, age and gender among its employees. The business also focuses on supplier diversity which ensures that the firm provides opportunities to numerous different suppliers, thus enabling growth of other little businesses and creating job opportunities for all members of the community. According to the organization website (cited by Hosni 2010) Staples has its foundation, Staples Foundation for Learning, whose mission is to provide support to organizations in the form of people education opportunities and job skills. The foundation lays emphasis on youths that are disadvantaged.

Planet

The firm is working towards developing products using green raw materials such as wood that has been harvested from forests that are managed sustainably, agricultural by products and wastes and

reduced the effect of the bio based products. The second activity aimed towards the planet is recycling wastes. For instance, staple aims at recycling all office equipment and electronics such as computers that have outlived their usefulness. The firm is committed to keeping landfill free from wastes. The third goal in taking care of the planet concerns climate and energy. The firm insists on using renewable energy. For instance, in 2008 it bought, from renewable energy sources 124 million kilowatt-hour of electricity. The sources included landfill gas, wind energy and biomass. Finally, as part of the environmental education program the firm has partnered with Earth Force to produce educational content for communities and teachers through out America to create awareness concerning the local environmental issues and also facilitate local action.

Profit

The organization support global and national non-profit organizations. It supports Earth Force, Ashokam Initiative for Competitive Inner City and others. It further supports innovative marketing programs such as East Button. The company is the world's largest producer of office products with sales in the last year hitting \$24 billion.

Conclusion

The Triple Bottom Line is certainly a concept that a firm can enhance the productivity at a dorm and also ensure diversity in its resources especially human resources (Woodfin, 2010). Staple has certainly indicate that this it is possible to make profit without hurting people and their environment and hopefully more firms will take up its example.