



e-book

# Sustainability and Environmental *Stewardship*

A Guide for Fueling Employee Engagement in Your CSR Program



# Seeking a deeper sense of meaning and purpose

Today's socially conscious workforce is looking for more than just perks and a paycheck. They're seeking a deeper sense of meaning and purpose that goes beyond their day-to-day responsibilities in their jobs, and wanting to have a greater impact on the world around them. Study after study shows that companies have a huge opportunity to use their workplace culture and consumer brands to meet people's **increasing desire to be good social citizens**.

High-performing companies have learned that harnessing this desire for purpose can enrich their relationships with employees and consumers and also create **stronger business and social outcomes**. That's why many progressive companies are redesigning their once-traditional corporate giving, matching, volunteering and community investment initiatives — what we call corporate "Goodness" programs — to do just that. Take, for example, **Microsoft** and **Visa**: they've successfully transformed their Goodness programs into impactful employee engagement strategies that embed purpose and giving back into their culture (and the world!).

Combining your people's grassroots passion for the planet with your corporate initiatives can turn your sustainability strategy into a force for greater impact — while infusing your culture with more purpose!



Making a positive impact

# 88%

**of millennials say their job is more fulfilling when they are provided opportunities to make a positive impact on social and environmental issues.**

## Harnessing people's passion for the planet

Companies that capitalize on this macro trend have an incredible opportunity to tap into people's passion as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and employee engagement strategies. And given the widespread desire and expectation from this generation of workers and consumers to support a healthier planet through their workplaces and the products they purchase, companies should be considering a new dimension to their CSR strategy that empowers employees to bring their passion for the planet to work. Whether or not you have a companywide sustainability or environmental mandate, supporting your workforce in having a positive influence on the environment can yield valuable returns — in employee engagement and **retention**, increased participation in workplace giving and volunteering programs, and significant reductions in your collective ecological footprint.



*For those companies with sustainability engagement initiatives, the overall employee engagement rate increased, even for those employees who didn't participate. Just the presence of a robust program creates an engagement halo effect for all employees.*



**Andrew Savitz**

“Talent, Transformation, and the Triple Bottom Line”

Often, sustainability initiatives are a strategic component of a business's operational practices and are led from the top down by executives. While many strides can be made in reducing emissions, improving supply chain management and more, employees tend to be recipients of information rather than participants in the strategy. They watch as posters are put up, goals are shared and communications let them know how they're doing a few times a year. A handful of highly driven and passionate sustainability champions may be inspired to learn more and change their behaviors, but most people will only be passively engaging, if at all.

If you want sustainability and environmental stewardship to gain more traction in your company, or if you want to leverage it to engage more people in your Goodness program, there are some simple yet powerful ways to get everyone in your organization engaged in day-to-day efforts! By taking an employee-centered approach and empowering people who are already invested in creating a healthier planet to support the cause with their time, talent, money and other positive actions, you'll see employee engagement grow from the bottom up and you'll infuse your culture with purpose — while also making a positive impact on the world!

**Ready to think about adding sustainability and environmental stewardship to your Goodness program? Here are some strategies to help you get started!**

*Start with positive actions — at work and in the home!*

Many of your people are looking for ways to make a difference, so it's important to give them options and let them choose how to participate in sustainability efforts that are personal and meaningful to them. For example, in addition to giving and volunteering, encourage your employees to take and track positive actions that keep environmental stewardship top of mind, like biking to work, eating meatless meals one day a week or watching a documentary about climate change. You'll help them learn and develop positive behaviors that encourage them to become environmental champions beyond the workplace. And, the benefits will extend into their personal lives and communities, while driving engagement and participation in your program!



## Sustainability and your Goodness program — they're better together

Your company may already have CSR efforts in place that support sustainability. Do your employees know about them? Are they invested in them? And have you invited them to join you in your journey?

Your Goodness program is a perfect way to help employees understand, align and help with your goals. For example, if your company has sustainability practices like energy or water conservation, consider educating people about them through donation campaigns or volunteering opportunities with environmental organizations that have a related mandate. Not only will you engage employees who are already environmental stewards and want to do more good, you'll inspire action in their colleagues who may not be as aware of your company's commitment to sustainability.



### Did You Know?

Leading technology, manufacturing and financial services brands are using **Missions** to engage their people around the world in learning new things and reducing their ecological footprint! Missions is a fun way to engage employees in doing more good through gamified, easy-to-complete activities that can be tracked and measured. It comes pre-loaded with more than 200 activities aimed at helping your employees adopt habits that promote a healthy planet and change their behavior in the long term. (Good news! You can add, edit and delete activities to fit your business, culture and program goals.)



### Pro Tip

With **Missions**, you can create special campaigns that move the needle on any of your CSR goals, including sustainability. Share information about your company's environmental objectives and initiatives, and related charities and nonprofits, through the news feature. Get your people involved by running giving and volunteer opportunities that make it simple to support these causes. And if any of these are your corporate granting recipients, consider adding a special match incentive to draw more awareness and support. Missions also comes with comprehensive reporting, so you can measure your company's impact and let employees — and the world — know how you're doing!



*Missions has changed my way of interacting with things every day. For example, I try to use the revolving door and I turn off the water while shampooing. It gives me a good feeling that I am doing better to save our Earth. My next step will be spreading those good habits with family and friends.*

**Karandeep**

Missioner (what we call a Missions user!)

## Include everyone for maximum impact!

**Inclusion is top of mind at many organizations**, and it needs to be mindfully built into a company's culture so that everyone can participate in all initiatives. And, sustainability and environmental stewardship initiatives can promote an inclusive employee experience because they offer additional opportunities to participate in your Goodness program. Some of your employees may not be able to give time or money because of their lifestyle, personal circumstances or even ability. It can also be hard for remote employees to participate unless they're given easy-to-complete activities that don't depend on them being in your headquarters.

Try offering a range of opportunities that will be meaningful to various groups, so everyone can join in. This could mean encouraging people to give and volunteer with local environmental causes or to take (and track) small positive actions that tap into their sense of personal responsibility, like turning off their monitors at the end of the day or taking the stairs instead of the elevator. They'll build better behaviors, while feeling good that your company is giving them achievable, actionable ways to make an impact!

*Missions felt like my company was actively helping me to be more informed. I felt positive about making a quantifiable difference and knowing that others are also participating.*

**Sarah**

Missioner from a Fortune 100 company



## Did You Know?

**Missions** is proven to engage remote workers! During PayPal's Missions beta campaign, 64% of participants were from outside of their headquarters and were located all over the world. And in just three weeks, their participating team members saved an estimated 998 pounds of waste, 10,683 gallons of water, 29,503 kWh of energy and 22,205 pounds of carbon!

**Having accessible software is another important step you can take toward promoting inclusion in your culture. That's why we're pleased to report that Benevity's corporate Goodness platform is the most inclusive solution in the industry!**

## Let local sustainability champions lead the charge

It's not enough to only have sustainability champions at the top; they can be cultivated at all levels of your organization. So, when it comes to scaling your Goodness program and using it to encourage environmental action, consider your most powerful resource — your employees! When you take a bottom-up approach, more of your employees will feel ownership, even if it's not directly related to their role.

You might already know some of your environmental enthusiasts because you can see the steps they're taking every day to be more sustainable and if they're encouraging others to join them. You can also send a survey to identify these motivated people or reach out to your sustainability-related employee resource groups. Many of them would be keen to be ambassadors at work, and they can help you maximize participation by finding causes and activities that are important and locally relevant.

For companies with offices in different regions, empowering employees can be an especially important step toward ensuring local relevance because they'll know the most pressing environmental needs, from air pollution in dense cities to water conservation in the desert, or from air conditioner usage in the south to winter heating costs in the north. When tapping into the passion of these people, consider empowering them to co-create content that will catalyze their co-workers' engagement in your environmental efforts. This could mean organizing a community cleanup, donation campaigns or Friendraisers (campaigns that let employees involve their friends and family) for local conservation organizations, and more. You can help them make an even bigger impact by promoting their campaigns through news articles in your Goodness program software, email or any other internal communication channels.



### Did You Know?

If you want to empower ambassadors for your Goodness program, be sure to choose software with flexible permission levels. Benevity's employee engagement solution comes standard with multiple role levels so you can ensure your content creators only have as much access as they need (at no extra cost!).



## Go green, inside and out

Employees aren't the only ones who want more from business, either. Consumers do too, with **87% of Americans** saying they would purchase a product because the company advocates for an issue they care about. These demands are clearly resonating because last year, more than ever before, CEOs spoke up and **took action in support of their organizations' values**. This includes stepping up for the environment, with **Apple announcing that it runs 100% on renewable energy** and **Patagonia bringing a lawsuit against the Trump administration** to preserve Bears Ears National Monument in Utah.

Companies have a powerful opportunity to invite customers, partners or anyone in their community to join their social mission through their Goodness program. If your organization has sustainability-related partner charities that you give company grants, employee donations and volunteer time to, why not encourage your stakeholders to join you in supporting them? By showing employees and the community that your company supports their efforts, you'll forge an authentic connection with them while fostering a powerful sense of pride and affinity.



### Pro Tip

Many Fortune 1000 companies use **Benevity's Community Impact Portal**, a branded external-facing microsite, to invite the public to donate to featured causes and receive a match for their donations. It's a great way to welcome your community and the world into joining your efforts!





## Change the world together

Whether your company has sustainability initiatives in place or not, we hope you're inspired to harness your people's and customers' passion for the planet through your Goodness program. Not only will you infuse more purpose into your culture, engage more employees and take a stand with your brand, but you'll all work together toward a worthy goal — making the world a better, healthier place!

### Ready to learn more?

**You can promote sustainability and environmental stewardship through your company's Goodness program.**

[Request a demo](#)



Benevity, Inc., a certified B Corporation, is the global leader in corporate social responsibility and employee engagement software, including online giving, matching, volunteering, community investment and purpose-driven actions. Many of the world's most iconic brands rely on Benevity's award-winning cloud solutions to power corporate "Goodness" programs that attract, retain and engage today's diverse workforce by connecting people to the causes that matter to them. With software that is available in 20 languages, to a client community of 18 million people around the world, Benevity has processed more than \$5 billion in donations and 32 million hours of volunteering time and awarded over one million grants to 251,000 nonprofits worldwide.

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