



63 Giving something back to society

What is giving back?

Giving back is when you do something for the society that you live in and do business genuinely to help people. This activity should not be profit related. Giving back is about sharing your success with others less advantaged than you. Examples of how you might do this could be donating a percentage of your monthly profits to a special charity, offering your skills or service to educate or inform underprivileged groups of people, offering an educational opportunity to state-funded schools or donating products to people who you know would benefit from them but are unable to afford them.

Why is it important to do this?

The activity of giving back is important to the soul of your business. Those important values of care, consideration and awareness of those less fortunate are fundamental to the spiritual growth of your business. If you give a little you will receive a lot. People also like to associate themselves with businesses that support causes and disadvantaged people in a meaningful way. If you do this it can bring you closer to your customers.

Your challenge

Running a small business and striving to make it a success can take all your energy and focus. It can be easy to get lost in the drive for results and forget the importance of giving back. Your challenge is to remember and, if you believe it is important, find something you and your business can do that would benefit others that has nothing to do with promoting yourself or making money. It can be refreshing to think like this sometimes.

How to give back

Find something that you can do that means something to you and your organisation. Look for a charity that you can support with which you have some affinity. Look for a business enterprise or state-funded organisation that needs the services that your business offers. Marketingco has worked with a local enterprise council that runs business enterprise days in local schools. I have run educational introduction-to-marketing sessions for school-children. This was fun

for us to do as well as being of great interest to the pupils. Breast cancer charities and the protection league for horses are charities that we support because of the special affinity we have with them. Find a worthy cause that resonates with you and your team. Find a situation where your skills could be of great value.

You don't have to give much to give back. The act of giving is enough. In many situations only £5 a month will feed or clothe a whole family in a third world country or save an animal. You also don't have to wait until you are successful to give back. Give as you are growing as a business as a way of showing how you mean to go on. Give in accordance with the rate of your success.

WHAT IS RIGHT FOR YOU AND YOUR ORGANISATION – SPECIAL RESPONSE CHECKLIST

- ▶ Brainstorm ideas with your team.
- ▶ What charities do people have a connection with?
- ▶ What kind of charities would resonate with your type of business?
- ▶ What is going on at the moment in the world that you could support?
- ▶ Where would a donation of your products make a BIG difference?
- ▶ What kind of local, national or global organisations need your support now?
- ▶ How could you involve your customers in helping you find new ways to give back?
- ▶ How could you use your own marketing activities to gather more support?

How to use this information

There are potentially hundreds of opportunities to help others. Organisations are always looking for special businesses to help them in their cause. Search them out and offer your helping hand.

Think give back and show your values in action