



Written by *Bharisha Mirpuri*

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR EMPLOYEES TO ENGAGE IN CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY?

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a concept that companies have willingly incorporated into their firm's culture for some time now. When firms develop CSR frameworks, there are stages of complex planning that involve a multitude of people and considerations such as branding, innovation, staff and customer engagement. Above all, CSR should primarily concern aligning charitable initiatives with a firm's core values to best serve wider communities that we all live and work in, and to foster positive employee engagement and community awareness.

“ *Professionals of all levels frequently tell us they want to be a part of something more than a profit-making machine [...] and are able to feel they are contributing to something larger than their individual role* ”

As a recruiter, the frequent message I receive from candidates is that they feel as though they want to be part of a firm that has a great culture

that ethically and morally complements their personal and professional values. Professionals of all levels frequently tell us they want to be a part of something more than a profit-making machine — where employees are encouraged to enjoy a healthy work/life balance, foster positive and productive team relationships and are able to feel they are contributing to something larger than their individual role.

Employees are the most important asset of any company because they are the most genuine representations of brand and culture. When firms engage in charitable activities, it gives employees a deeper sense of purpose in the workplace. In return, you have higher employee engagement, productivity and retention. A great example is Salesforce, one of the most sought-after companies to work for in the world. They pay employees 56 hours a year to volunteer in the



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community. Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff explained that they earned the winning spot on Fortune's 100 best places to work in 2018 for this very reason.

Aquis Search adopts a 'keep it simple' approach. There are specific organisations that are close to some of our team member's hearts, such as the Children's Heart Foundation and Sons and Daughters, to which we regularly donate clothing, toys and other necessities. We have also run AIDS, autism and arthrogryposis awareness campaigns. Whatever the initiative, the focus for us is to have employees understand that despite being a part of the daily grind, there are other people and global matters that requires both our attention and action. Everyone has a back story, and as a firm led by an internal CSR committee, we have found our CSR initiatives have brought us closer together.

At Aquis Search, our goals may be a little more

moderate than companies like Salesforce, but the outcome is the same. If employees are proud of the company they work for, they are likely to refer people, remain loyal and feel that sense of belonging to the broader community. Most of us here in Hong Kong lack vitamin D because of our culture of long working hours, this gives us a chance to step out of our 'boxes' and make a difference.

Miriam Leung, Director of the Private Practice team (one of our most profitable desks) and an avid charity supporter, started the CSR committee in 2016 with the support of our partners, proving it's possible for people to find the time even in the busiest of days to serve the community.

It may sound like a cliché, but people really do matter.

## About the Author

*Bharisha is a Senior Consultant in the legal in-house team based in Hong Kong and also part of the CSR committee at Aquis Search.*

*She specializes in recruiting lawyers of levels of experience across buy and sell side financial service institutions for a range of corporate governance and regulatory focused roles. Bharisha has successfully built relationships with her clients in private, investment, corporate and retail banks alongside asset management, private equity and insurance firms.*

*Bharisha has considerable experience working with financial institutions in a variety of corporate governance roles including placing compliance and risk professionals into financial services firms. Prior to working directly with clients, she started her executive search career as researcher, learning best practices and building her network from the ground up*

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