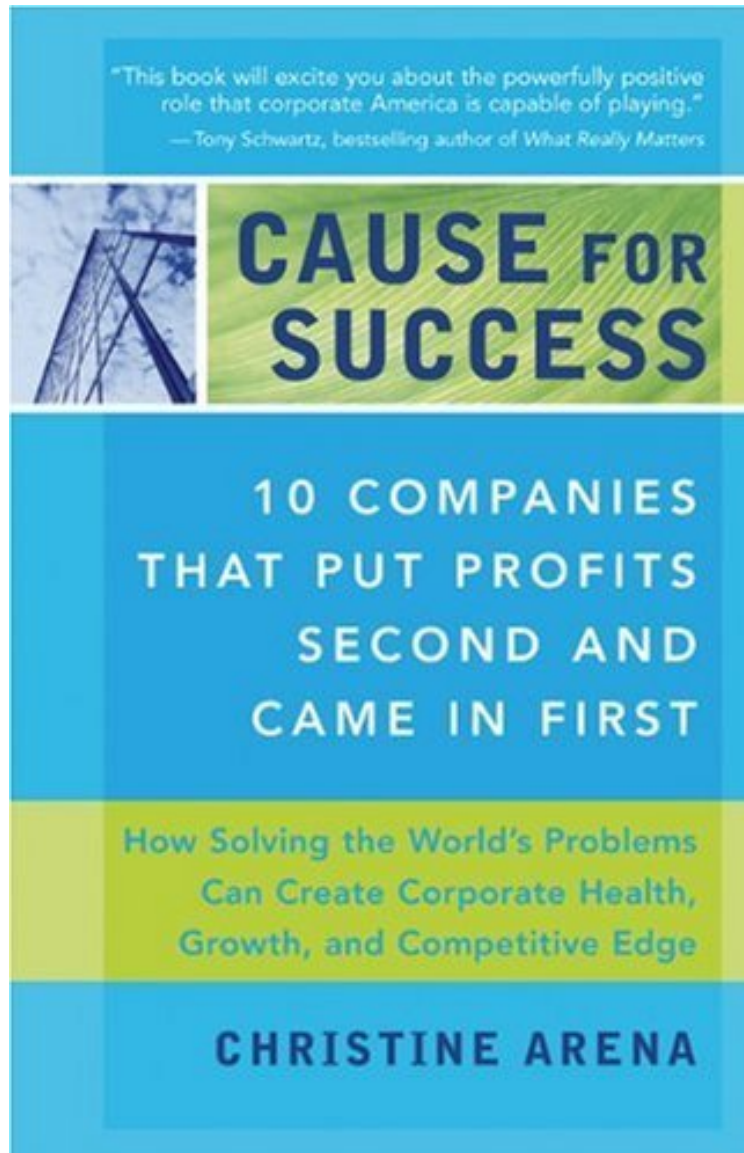


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## Cause for Success: 14 Companies That Put Profit Second and Came in First

*Christine Arena*

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**Christine Arena : Cause for Success: 14 Companies That Put Profit Second and Came in First** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cause for Success: 14 Companies That Put Profit Second and Came in First:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. What is the new, new thing for business leaders today?By GeenaChristine Arena has created a powerfully provocative portrait of business as a high-potential, transformational

force in today's world. With real case studies of companies like British Petroleum, Hewlett Packard, Stoneyfield Farms and Avon - and not-so-well-known companies like Grameen Bank - Cause For Success clearly demonstrates how imaginative and socially-conscious business leadership creates high social value plus remarkable profitability. Ms. Arena challenges businesses to explore what people really want (clean air, good health, honest work, for starters-not just color variations on packaging). I'd list this book as required reading for every business school student - and everyone who aspires to true leadership in the 21st century.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Surprising Social Consciousness from Well-Branded Businesses By Shel Horowitz Profiles 10 socially conscious "high-purpose" companies--and predicts that corporations ignoring these greater purposes will meet with failure in the marketplace. And by paying attention to social criteria, these companies can actually move forward faster and more consistently: "Rather than approaching social responsibility, environmental stewardship, philanthropy, operational accountability, and ethics as separate interests, high-purpose companies align the goals of these activities with their business strategies, leading them to be remarkably effective on all fronts...in solving colossal world problems, they tap into unmet needs vital enough to sustain business performance over time." (p. xvii)

Arena identifies several traits these companies have in common: compassionate, heart-driven leaders; an ability to pick causes that are relevant to the company's core business--and to work on those problems in ways that play to the company's mission-critical key strengths; a willingness to imbue every aspect of operation with genuine attention to the wider social cause (they "walk their talk," in other words); a needs-based approach that gives primary attention to solving the social problem: "By allowing the problem to lead to the appropriate solution, these companies discovered financially self-sustaining philanthropic models, while making their cause-related programs essential to the communities they serve." Finally, all the companies use a broad definition of success. Most of the book is given over to profiles of the ten companies:

- \* Interface, a company that reinvented itself as green and sustainable, after 21 years of the traditional extractive, polluting approach--and since its conversion to a cyclical model, has grown to one of the largest flooring companies in the world. CEO Ray Anderson says, "The economy is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the environment." The company has pioneered such innovations as leasing its carpets to its major corporate customers, so instead of going to the landfill, the used carpet goes back to the plant for disassembly and reuse.
- \* Oil giant BP, whose groundbreaking effort to reduce carbon dioxide emissions has made the company vastly more profitable.
- \* Eziba (founded with the socially responsible mission of lifting 3rd-world artisans out of poverty and preserving their culture by making their craft items available to developed countries)
- \* Stonyfield Farm, which finds its commitment to organic, sustainable farming has not only kept a generation of local dairy farmers solvent and profitable, but has also influenced food giant Danone, which bought the company a few years back
- \* Avon (yes, the cosmetics company--which has a major corporate goal of curing breast cancer)
- \* Timberland, with a 15-year history of supporting the City Year program: an urban volunteer community improvement corps
- \* Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, which made a conscious choice to end rapacious industry practices that are actually driving coffee farmers off their land
- \* The Body Shop, whose stores are such points of social action that they've not only helped release political prisoners all over the world, but have been able to collaborate with such personages as the Dalai Lama and Bruce Springsteen (and of course, such partnerships certainly make marketing a good deal easier!)
- \* Grameen Bank, a well-known microlender that has lifted thousands of Bangladeshi women out of poverty
- \* Hewlett-Packard, which seeds technology to microentrepreneurs in developing countries (and whose social change efforts I cover in a profile of HP's Barbara Waugh, one of several profiles of individuals who are making a difference--in my book, *Principled Profit: Marketing That Puts People First*)

It's important to note that Arena does not gloss over these companies' faults and problems; these are not models of perfection, but of continuous improvement. They've come a long way, either from their own histories as environmental and social abusers, or from proving, against society's expectations, that companies set up from the get-go as honorable, ethical, and socially committed can actually succeed in the marketplace. You can expect to see others of these ten companies profiled in future issues.

Shel Horowitz's award-winning sixth book, *Principled Profit: Marketing That Puts People First*, demonstrates how to build a business around ethics, environmental sustainability, and cooperative practices--and how to develop marketing that highlights those advantages.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

Movement towards a hopeful future By D. Speck

Christine Arena's "Cause for Success" is a refreshing glimpse into an emerging culture of consciousness. Especially so, when the news of the day is filled with Enronesque stories of corporate plundering of wealth and resources with little or no regard to the cost both in human and environmental capital, these studies bring both hope and inspiration for a better and seemingly reachable future. Christine Arena provides 10 brilliant examples of business perceiving, then executing long-term plans that seemingly contradict current attitudes in corporate governance, giving the reader a push into a new way of thinking about success.

Ms. Arena opens her book exploring British Petroleum (BP) and Interface; in showing how these giants of Petroleum and Textiles are able to make the shift from a solely profit driven model of production to one that values both the social and environmental resources on a par equal with profitability, the readers are bound to give credence to the other 8 but nonetheless brilliant examples of corporations building business around "the right thing to do" and consequentially finding success. A most inspiring read.

Stung by corporate scandals and media mayhem, many companies have begun integrating terms like "sustainable business," "conscious capitalism," and "ethical business" into their annual reports. Is it more corporate greenwashing or are businesses today really changing how and with whom they do business? Can corporate social responsibility become a new business standard? When it comes to implementing the kind of business strategies that create vital social and economic returns, many corporate leaders find themselves at a loss. "This is because, unlike branding or accounting, there are far too few solid industry case studies that profile the success stories and how those companies got there," says author and award-winning marketing specialist Christine Arena. Arena finds reasons to be optimistic while she examines new business paradigms for doing good and translating that good into profit. From Hewlett-Packard to British Petroleum to Stonyfield Farms and The Body Shop, Cause For Success profiles two case-study companies per chapter, exploring ideas such as philanthropy partnerships, ethics-driven businesses, how companies are serving the world's poor, bottom-line advantages of standing for social justice, as well as how some of the worst corporate citizens have become some of the best.

"This book will excite you about the powerfully positive role that corporate America is capable of playing." — Tony Schwartz, bestselling author of *What Really Matters*

"At a time when business confidence is depleted and cynicism about corporate conduct runs rampant, Christine Arena raises our sights and expectations. She reminds us that the companies that seek to make both a difference and a profit are the same ones that attract the most gifted, committed, and ambitious people. The cycle of virtue she describes is rooted in real case studies, not wishful thinking. Cause for Success is a cause for celebration as well as celebration." — Richard D. Parsons, chairman and CEO of Time Warner

"I loved this book. It will help all leaders redefine success in broader, longer-term ways previously overlooked in traditional business analysis." — Jonathan S. Lavine, managing director of Bain Capital

From the Publisher

Stung by corporate scandals, many companies have begun integrating terms like "sustainable business," "conscious capitalism," and "corporate citizenship" into their annual reports. Is it mere greenwashing or are businesses today really mending their ways? Can corporate social responsibility become the new gold standard in business? In *Cause for Success*, Christine Arena finds reasons to be optimistic while she examines new business paradigms for doing good and translating that good into profit. From Hewlett-Packard to British Petroleum to Stonyfield Farm and the Grameen Bank, the book profiles two case-study companies per chapter, exploring radical ideas about why ethics-driven companies are today's business trendsetters, how standing up for social justice garners competitive advantage, the bottom-line benefits of serving the world's poor, the potential business rewards of philanthropic partnerships, as well as how some of the worst corporate citizens have become some of the best.

From the Author

My initial objective in conducting research for *Cause for Success* was to examine the optimal relationship between "charity" and the modern corporation. What makes corporate philanthropy programs thrive? What do companies stand to gain from attacking serious world problems? What does society stand to gain? And what does this mean for the future of capitalism? These are some of the questions that I sought to answer. At the onset of this project, I had no idea how potent the findings would be. I was stunned by the passion and devotion that some of the world's most renowned corporate leaders conveyed in addressing these matters. I did not realize how crucial service could be to a company's ability to sustain profitability and achieve greatness. I had also underestimated how critical it is that every company, regardless of size or industry, reassess its approach both to philanthropy and business success in general. Voluntary evolution, it turns out, is a necessary means of survival. Today I am totally convinced that we are in the midst of a sweeping transformation. Strategic corporate responsibility is changing the face of business. Like the rise of the Internet, it presents a new playing field with advanced rules. Companies that use it wisely gain competitive edge and growth opportunities, while companies that ignore its significance eventually lose ground and face greater challenges. Corporate good deeds are not just a nice thing to do. They are among the wisest things a company can do.