

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AS A STRATEGY IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT: This paper addresses aspects of corporate social business responsibility their historical processes and theories that explain this strategy. It addresses the environmental preservation and other theories to improve the quality of life society. Likewise is discussed in the disclosure of the social enterprises and their benefits. The tools for business management ethics are essential to contemporary management. Seeking the welfare of customers, suppliers and society, thus becoming socially responsible. The new way to consume has changed the strategic vision of the companies, seeking to establish itself in the market today. Social responsibility accepts the role of an important management tool that can also result in numerous benefits to society.

Keywords: Social responsibility. Strategy. Consumer. Environmental preservation. Social report.

1. INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Management is seeking strategic paths for the survival of companies in today's market. Increasingly competitive and funneling, either by difficulties imposed by the national tax system or by the competition for space that is increasingly difficult. This difficulty, in large part, is due to the change of concepts and values that, with each passing day, are renewed or transformed.

It is noted that consumers are more demanding and aware when purchasing a good, service or product, so the company must adapt to this new era of conscious consumption.

It is with this vision that the present work expresses tools for the company, in its day-to-day seek better strategies and, consequently, greater profitability.

[...] the smartest companies have already understood that they should not disregard sustainability in their management strategies and relationship with consumers. Those that have a product intended for the final consumer will not, in the coming years, be able to ignore this factor as an important element in the construction of their brand, at the risk of losing tune with increasingly demanding, critical and unfaithful customers. The "business to business" will need to be sustainable if they want to secure their license to operate in communities, preserve or strengthen their reputation or even avoid potential foci of social and environmental conflict that may harm their activities (www.responsabilidadesocial.com, visited on 11/26/09, VOLTOLINI, 2009, p. 01).

The great challenge of the current century is the sustainable and participatory business survival among its customers, suppliers and, above all, society.

It is up to the administrator and / or manager to create means for the company to be inserted

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in an active way in the market, for this stands out social responsibility and all its segments as an important tool in this process.

1.1 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Social responsibility is understood as the ethical relationship of the company with all interest groups that influence or are impacted by its performance (*stakeholders*), as well as respect for the environment and investment in social actions. It is the expansion and evolution of the company concept beyond its internal environment. To the extent that the company is inserted in society, there is a relationship of interdependence between both.

According to Santiago (2002, p. 95) in a global view, it is desirable that the practice of the socially responsible for a company is inserted in its philosophy, in its perspective and in its business objectives. The adoption of this practice can be awakened by the personal conviction of the leaders or by strategic business conceptions as a way to achieve real socially responsible objectives or their objectives generated by the eventual benefits produced by the adoption of social responsibility.

In 1899, Andrew Carnegie, founder of the U.S. steel corporation, published a book entitled: *The Gospel of Wealth*, which established the classic approach to corporate social responsibility. Carnegie's vision was based on the principles of charity and custody. The principle of charity required the more fortunate members of society to help the less fortunate, and the Bible-derived principle of custody required businesses and the wealthy to see themselves as guardians or caretakers, keeping their property in custody for the benefit of society as a whole.

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In the 1950s and 1960s, the principles of charity and custody were widely accepted in American companies, as company managers admitted that "power brings responsibility" (STONNER and FREEMAN, 1985, p.72).

It was only after the effects of World War 2 that the idea that the company should care not only about the shareholders, but also about the whole society that it affected.

In the 70s and 80s, the convergence of various economic forces, such as increased energy costs, increased inflation and the national debt, caused some scholars to reexamine the notions of corporate social responsibility (STONNER and FREEMAN, 2006, p.46).

The doctrine spread throughout European countries, both in business and academic circles. In Germany, the rapid development of the theme was noticed, with about 200 of the largest companies in that country integrating the financial balance sheets to the social objectives. However, France is the one who has taken the official step in formalizing the matter. It was the first country to "oblige companies to make periodic assessments of their social performance with regard to labor and working conditions."

With greater participation of authors in the issue of social responsibility, the end of the 90's presents the discussion on ethical and moral issues in companies, which contributes significantly to the definition of the role of organizations.

1.2 THE FUNCTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONS

All productive organizations have in common the need to organize their labor, to manage their capital and to define their technological level in the way that best allows them to face local, national and international competition. On this level, globalization, if on the one hand intensifies competition, on the other, with its surprising communication technology and its ever faster mobility of capital, offers companies a wider range of choices and a more varied set of initiatives to remain in the market.

The idea of social responsibility embedded in business is relatively recent. With the emergence of new demands and greater pressure for transparency in business, companies are forced to adopt a more responsible stance in their actions. (www.responsabilidadesocial.com), consulted October 3, 2009, p.3).

In the face of competition, the company must look for the right channels to stay in tune with the market. This search quickly leads her to realize that she cannot maintain herself as a closed, isolated, and rigid organization.

Several spaces of interlocution are within the reach of contemporary companies. The company must be able to interact with the social actors that work within it (workers' representation entities and their trade union centrals). Integration in the field of business should be prepared in order to dialogue with the various entities that represent it (trade unions and business associations, institutes and research centers). Also maintain and renew reliability and mutual respect in their relations with external groups (suppliers, customers, advertising and marketing agencies, public and private credit institutions, legal-legal bodies of the state, etc.).

The movements of technological diversification, of reconversion in the industrial and service sectors, of decentralization of productive facilities, which increasingly require synergistic action between company and society (SILVA, 2001, p.34).

International experiences clearly indicate that today there is a growing concern to combine business success, delimited by the challenges of productive, technological, administrative and organizational reorganization, with socially responsible conduct.

The possibility of combining profitability with social responsibility is demonstrated by studies by the Franklin Research and Development Institute in 1984, which show that the 100 companies that have assumed socially responsible practices have obtained globally better results among the 500 companies cited and endorsed by Standard and Poors in the USA (Mamou-Mani,

1995, p.39).

For Freire (2001, p.35) the preponderant logic of companies has always been that of productivity as a function of profitability, remaining hidden, or submitted to this logic, their ability to respond to the social demands of their interlocutors.

Tiburcio (2001, p.36) states that if the profit of a company is threatened for whatever reason, surely the social progress that it provided with its actions, consequently, is also affected.

That is why many corporations and institutes develop and promote projects and studies to minimize the losses of socially responsible companies. In order to make them a "mirror" for other companies in the same field and that, generally, are competitors.

The functions of business organizations are not limited to representing the interest of their affiliates, but always seek to improve and differentiate their activities in order to provide technical and legal advice, provide educational programs, organize information and communication systems, elaborate updated analyses of the regional, national and international economic situation.

These organizations are considered structures of intermediation between social groups and public authorities, precisely because of the links they maintain internally and externally with the business world.

The change in the corporate culture, as the commitment to the social agenda involves the opening of new channels, which go far beyond the classic functions destined to them and are related to the challenges of modernization, technological innovation and administrative management (Martinelli, 1994, p.40).

The perception that there are urgent social problems pertinent to the activities of companies, leads some entities to take initiatives to format cooperative actions, engaging their associates in the dialogue of public authorities.

The entities are willing to act and allocate resources and energies to public agencies – local, state and national – and other institutions, for the implementation of programs directed to some specific segment of society.

The recognition that the company has a social function leads the representative entities to propose actions that aim to sensitize entrepreneurs to review the organization of their companies based on fundamentally ethical, moral principles, allied to good economic performance and respect for institutional rules.

Several training activities are carried out to stimulate new attitudes that allow to expand the respect of the current business rules-obligations and that establish some fundamental moral principles.

The concern to promote business effectiveness and efficiency is affirmed in contrast to any and all activities in the social sector. For this attitude, all initiatives direct to the social field provide additional costs to companies; Consequently, they should be avoided or postponed until the equilibrium of the sector in crisis is reached again. The impact caused by the urgency to reorganize the technological apparatus and to recompose the market thus seems to impose a priority that discourages concerns with the management of human resources, the preservation of the environment and the concern to interact with the social and institutional environment (Souza, 2001, p.49).

Many and different are the causes of depredation of nature, the degradation of the environment and the deterioration of the quality of life of the vast majority of the population.

Those directly responsible are also many and diverse. The solution of environmental problems, or their minimization, requires a new attitude of entrepreneurs and administrators, who must go through and consider the environment in their decisions and adopt administrative and technological conceptions that contribute to expand the support capacity of the planet.

1.3 BUSINESS ETHICS

According to Sabino and Rocha (2004, p. 37), ethics, from the Latin *Ethica*, from the Greek *Ethiké*, is defined as a moral science, whose objective of study is value judgments, insofar as these relate to the distinction between good and evil. In a proposal for a more up-to-date definition, ethics means the constitution of values and rules by society to ensure coexistence in harmony.

For Alonso (2006, p.3), ethics is: The word ethics derives from the Greek *ethos*, which means custom. In Latin, the customs of the people are designated with the word *mos*, *moris*, from which derives the moral voice. Therefore, from the etymological point of view, one can speak indistinctly of ethics or morals to denominate the same theme.

Following these definitions we can characterize ethics as a set of rules that human beings, being rational, must take into account in their social relations.

Specifying ethics and morals, it is correct to use both terms to qualify good or bad human conduct, ethical or unethical, moral or immoral.

One can also see ethics through another prism, that of a theoretical discipline, but still one will reach the same end, ethics always focused on human relations, their attitudes, their values.

[...] As a theoretical discipline, ethics has always been part of philosophy and has always defined its object of study as morality, duty to do, the qualification of good and evil, the best way to act collectively. Ethics then evaluates customs, accepts or disapproves of them, says which social actions are morally valid and whic

They are not [...]. It defines the moral good as the ideal of the best act or the best being (SROUR, 2004, p. 271).

The purpose of ethics is to find a point of common good, where, all acting well, find the reality of being happy.

"[...] Ethics requires us to go beyond the "I and you" to reach the universal law, the universalizable judgment, the point of view of the impartial spectator or ideal observer, or whatever we call it" (SINGER, 2000, p.10).

Dealing with the knowledge and understanding of ethics, one can associate it with science, which studies and is concerned with explaining human behavior from the point of view of being social, which has its values according to the environment in which it is inserted, in this way it can be said that ethics is directly related to human psychology.

Thus, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of ethics in its entirety can only be confirmed through the observation of people's behavior through the various situations that are exposed in the course of their existence.

Ethics is responsible for the creation of a base that guarantees the possibility of coexistence and survival of a group, an organization, a nation that moved by an ethical conscience is able to weigh values, evaluate and judge possibilities, the lack of this ethical awareness compromises the development, support and permanence of this entire structure.

Ethics has always been linked to human reality, its first records date back many years in the history of humanity.

Between the years 500 and 300 BC, we find approximately the golden period of Greek thought. It is an important period not only for the Greeks, or for the ancients, but a period where many ideas and many definitions and theories emerged that still accompany us today. It is not only three thinkers (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle) who are responsible for this fabulous concentration of to know, and for this incredible analysis and reflection on the action of man, but perhaps it is worth and worth quickly schematizing some of the ideas of the last two to have a picture of how ethical problems were formulated at that time (VALLS, 1993, p. 24).

By understanding how ethics was treated in its early days, it becomes easier to understand in such troubled days that humanity is living today.

For Plato, every man should seek happiness, this was the central concern of ethics at that time, such happiness was not only aimed at an individual being, it should encompass the group as a whole. Subsequently, Aristotle, already more in-depth in studies due to the many researches carried out with people, began to verify that each person in his way of living had a particular

conception of what was "good". From this observation, he focuses on the conception that each person, inserted in his personal and social reality will have a way of facing what is good or bad. So you can't determine an equal good for everyone. For him, each region, with its customs and values, will determine what is good, that is, what is ethical.

2. ETHICS IN COMPANIES

Business ethics reflects on the norms and values effectively dominant in a company, questioning the qualitative factors that make a certain act a good act . As applied ethics it aims to establish, through agreement with the people affected by the business action, material and procedural rules that have been put into force as having binding character [...] In a broad sense this way of thinking is based on the idea of a social contract according to which all members of society behave in a harmonious way, taking into account the interests of others (LEISINGER, 2001, p. 22).

As an ethical being implies analyzing all daily human attitudes, one will take as a basis of one of these activities to deepen the studies, the reality within the organizations, which are constituted of people who are exposed daily to the most varied situations that will lead them to make decisions that may or may not be ethical.

The first concerns in the sense of finding the ethics of organizations are found from the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century.

The observation of this new reality led to the questioning of who was more important to the organization? Whether it was the machines that streamlined the work, or the employees who handled them?

[...] Until the 50s, the concept of business ethics had not yet entered our vocabulary. The moral aspects of economic activities, when considered, were in the context of social ethics, revolving mainly around the labor issue [...] Only by the end of the 60s did the relations between economy and society reach a wider public, which caused an implication in the range of interests: they came into focus not so much the rights of employees and workers, but, above all, the rights of minorities, women's rights, environmental protection, health and safety issues based on new theologies, concern for developing countries. All this fits today in the rubric of business ethics (LEISINGER, 2001, p.15).

Business ethics implies precepts, procedures that must be adhered to by the members of an organization as an integral part of the whole that it constitutes.

Business ethics reflects on the norms and values effectively dominant in a company, questioning themselves by the qualitative factors that make a certain act is an act "well". As applied ethics, it aims to establish, through agreement with the people affected by the business action, substantive and procedural standards that have been put into force in the company as having binding character (LEISINGER, 2001, p. 22).

These business actions taken according to groupthink do not refer only to your internal audience. This concern should be extended to the surrounding society, to consumers, partners, and the entire general public who are directly or indirectly being affected by the organization, because, considering "ethics" as a result of human actions and that companies are constituted by human persons, it is then deduced that a company could not exist without being involved in all its processes ethics, Mainly and primarily in the treatment with their primary patrimony, the employees, who according to ethical principles must be committed to working for the common good of all within the organization and with the society that it reaches.

But what can be noticed is that in most cases, what is found in organizations are some actions of good intention, which even relate to ethics, but are not purely ethical, because they are always more linked to material goods and, mainly, to profits.

Ethics is perfectly applicable to the success or failure of an organization, especially today, in which people, consumers are increasingly informed and with this, concerned with the origin of the product or service they are acquiring, the awareness of quality has made ethics, which for a long time was forgotten, back to be considered in great importance for organizations in the conduct of their business. This conception does not only affect the company as a material organization, but mainly the people who compose, participate and command them. This ethical behavior of organizations has very positive reflections on society, the appreciation of its image, its brand, its work philosophy, and this only has to benefit the organization and its aggregates.

The concern in ethical performance in business is most noticeable in the USA, being registered a great development. In Brazil, it still does not have this dimension, because we have certain barriers that are usually linked to giving a way or making up reality.

Many are the concerns that ethical action implies in the business world: the impacts on the environment, the reality of employees, the functionality or effects that your products and services can cause to the consumer, and so on. Often these

Worries end up being trampled by the desperate desire to profit and secure themselves in the market, to overcome the competition at any cost. However, it is possible to act ethically without harming profitability. Without profits organizations simply would not exist, and profit also has its social role.

[...] Business profits are not only economically necessary, they also possess an ethical-social importance: the economic success of a company, the preservation of productive jobs, the availability of important goods and services, as well as the development of new technical solutions. Profits also enable economic, social and ecological investments, and through the resources that result from their taxation, they make an important contribution to the financing of the tasks of the state (LEISINGER, 2001, p. 24).

In this way the company that has good percentages of profits also has good percentages of contribution to the with the business ethics, even if indirectly it can already be considered an ethically active company. However organizations can not be only linked to what is described and is required by law, it is desirable, necessary that each one, according to its possibilities understand that it has its share of contribution to offer to society, which in reality is its reason for existing.

Being ethical has not been a very easy task for organizations, perhaps because they are too focused on the gains and not on the way in which they are acquired.

If companies defined their purpose in providing services, it would be easier to visualize that profit is the result, so the better the product or service provided, the greater its profitability, this in an ethical way.

Taking again the basis of ethics: human persons and the relationship of society, it can be seen that ethical thinking is not something that is imposed, and it is important that each individual realizes his value, his need, his importance in daily actions. Taking the business reality, it is necessary that companies provide resources that lead their human capital to act correctly in the concern for the greater good of all without being obliged. That this way of acting at work is something natural and routine and that everyone can feel responsible and start to have part and access to the good results that this will provide.

After dealing with ethical behavior in organizations, it is necessary to briefly report that some companies are still not as aware of this topic as they should be. There are many traces that an unethical behavior produces, among them, the most common are the lack of concern for employees, which involves issues of remuneration, health, safety, environmental degradation, this being not only the pollution of rivers, but also the impact it causes around them, noises, dust, garbage, as well as corruption and tax evasions. Through these considerations about what it is to act ethically or not, it is worth mentioning that ethics is not responsible for resolving these dilemmas, it must be understood and used as a means of developing conditions to reach a consensus on the best action to be developed, in order to reach a resolution.

2.1 THE SOCIAL BALANCE SHEET (STRATEGIC APPROACH)

2.2 IN THE WORLD

Until the mid-30s, the idea of social responsibility and access to corporate information was virtually unknown by large corporations.

The social balance sheet is the set of information based on technical-accounting, managerial and economic, capable of providing a view of the capital-labor relationship with regard to its

different economic-social aspects (SILVA, 2001, p.104).

In Brazil, the movement in support of social responsibility gains momentum from the 90s and is a consequence of the emergence of a number of non-governmental organizations, as well as the non-egalitarian growth of the years of the "economic miracle".

Faced with the State's failure to meet our severe social demands, companies increasingly act proactively and incorporate a fairer social discourse. As for the format of what is conventionally called "Social Balance", this can be the most varied. What is certain is that the disclosure of the social performance of a company interests business groups for the most diverse reasons. The information contained in it should not only be a "check-list" of socio-environmental requirements, but should accurately describe the picture of the company's social activity in a given period of time.

Among the multiple consequences of the process of economic globalization has been the growing exacerbation of competition in the market arising from the generalized tendency to commercial liberalism worldwide.

To get the best out of the social balance sheet, the company must recognize it as a source of the company's social memory and seek to use it as a formal element of its information system on training and performance of human resources, using it as a tool to increase business competitiveness. "The social balance sheet must be produced annually, because, in one way or another, it will be

one of the forms of technical-accounting, managerial and economic balance of the company (Freire, 2001, p.105)".

The company must establish the information it deems important for social management.

2.3 SOCIAL BALANCE SHEET AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

For the social balance sheet to exercise its role as an instrument of business management, it is necessary that through it it is possible to measure and judge social facts linked to the company, both within it (company x employees), and around it (company x community).

The simplicity of the model proposed by Ibase has the advantage of encouraging all companies to disclose their social balance sheet regardless of the size and sector in which they operate (SILVA, 2001, p.126).

The social balance sheet favors all groups that interact with the company. To suppliers and investors, it informs how the company faces its responsibilities regarding its human resources, which is a good indicator of the way the company is run. To consumers, the idea is that the mentality of the company's leaders is associated with the quality of the product or service that it

offers.

The State helps in the formulation of public policies: the social balance sheet presents subsidies for the elaboration of legal norms that regulate the activities of companies with a view to the well-being of the individual and the community.

3. METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 THE METHODOLOGICAL PATH

In today's globalized world, characterized by political, economic and social differences, there has been a growing awareness and demand by society for other agents to act in the social area. Among these agents, companies are increasingly seeking to act with social responsibility. Receiving increasing demands from society and facing the competitive situation of the globalized world. Companies have sought to find differentials that allow them to maintain and add partners and value to their business, considering their stakeholders. Through this problem, what actions should be inserted in the daily context of the company and what is the way to develop social responsibility?

The theme was chosen due to the need of companies to commit to society in general, aiming at a marketing strategy and also the commitment to the environment. To this end, we propose the removal of social actions from the exclusively assistentialist and amateur character.

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Show the possible means to develop social responsibility within the organization with emphasis on its business management strategy.

- Detail methods and studies that are involved in this topic;
- Analyze ideas and proposals related to social responsibility;
- Review a case study;
- Present solutions, in order to develop corporate responsibility and disseminate the concepts and practices of the use of private resources, aiming at improving the living conditions of society.

In the preceding months, there is a need for public and/or private companies to commit to reducing their impacts on the environment and seeking working methods that cooperate with society in a high scope.

The current consumerism is being reformulated, with requirements that go beyond the total quality of the product, in it, must be embedded the social commitment of its manufacturer.

The research is of the qualitative, bibliographic theoretical, descriptive exploratory type, with support in field research.

Qualitative research involves intensive and long-term observation in a natural

environment, accurate and detailed recording of events in the environment, interpretation and analysis of data using descriptions and narratives.

The research was carried out in companies located in the municipality of Ibaiti and region in the State of Paraná.

The research was conducted with managers or administrators and people who have a direct relationship with the theme within the company.

Through bibliographic collection and semi-open questionnaire.

3.2 DATA ANALYSIS

Although most companies have some type of project or even bond, it was noted that the subject creates some distrust because it is a long-term process to obtain financial return for companies.

But there are still a number of companies that do not have any kind of social project.

There is a visible concern regarding the theme, with regard to the fact of inserting your actions through the local media, because then it would be possible to add value to your product, or only, by positive marketing and the effects it would have.

Most companies consider it important because it improves the image of the products and the company before the consumer (marketing), some said it would be important to obtain discounts and tax incentives.

The main benefit that companies seek would be the recognition of society for the actions taken and consequently increase in sales. Some also responded that they would like to obtain local, state and national tax benefits.

Companies have a high level of concern for the local population. Most companies have as customers and employees, people who are part of this population.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The company that seeks not only the production in high quantities, but a quality product that involves, in its context, on the part of the business management strategy, an active performance in society, will undoubtedly have its space guaranteed in the market.

For this, there are numerous tools, cited in this work, but that need to be in constant theoretical review to adapt with the means of action of the companies that propose to perform this task. Assuming a responsibility with society requires thorough studies of its needs and thus develop a plan of action together with the public power to achieve the proposed objectives.

Positive marketing for the company becomes a consequence of the work developed successfully, and this only adds numbers to the company.

Strategies focused on social scope are charged more consistently but tend to obtain satisfactory results in all its aspects.

The collaboration sought here serves as an impetus for the development of new studies and research that relate this subject involving, mainly, the region called the "pioneer north", because there is a great need, on the part of society, to obtain the initiative of companies that are committed to social development, protection of the environment, social inclusion among other factors mentioned here.

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