

Friday, May 29, 2009

## **Study: More CEOs say good works boost recruiting**

Boston Business Journal - by [Mary Moore](#)

A report issued by the Massachusetts Business Roundtable shows that Boston-area companies are incorporating social responsibility initiatives in their business plans not just because they are good for the community, but also because they help recruit and retain workers.

This marks a shift in corporate philanthropy since the Roundtable released its Primer for Strategic Corporate Philanthropy in 2000, which noted that corporate responsibility was beginning to evolve from community impact to bottom line impact. The most recent report shows that the evolution, indeed, has taken place.

Boston struggles to maintain its college grads as they move into the workforce, and the Round Table report underscores that philanthropy is a factor making some local companies more attractive to younger workers.

The Roundtable issued the report in collaboration with the University of Massachusetts Boston Emerging Leaders Program. A team from the Emerging Leaders Program started working on the report last summer, interviewing 20 Massachusetts companies about their corporate social responsibility activities -- predominantly large companies and representing a cross-section of industries.

“Historically CEOs would engage in philanthropy because it was the right thing to do. They wanted to be good corporate citizens,” said J.D. Chesloff, deputy director of the Massachusetts Business Roundtable. “Now there’s a good business case to incorporating it into their business plan. There’s a bottom line impact to it, in addition to being good for all the other community reasons.”

Based on the findings from the 20 companies included in the research, the report suggests five ways companies can build a culture of social responsibility:

- Create a clear link to the company’s mission and secure endorsement at the executive level.
- Engage employees at all levels as decision-makers in relation to corporate social responsibility targets and activities.

- Leverage employees' skills to make positive contributions to the community.
- Provide opportunities for employees to develop new skills.
- Encourage teamwork through group volunteer programs

“A lot of it is around a company being authentic about wanting to do something in the community and listening to what the employees are interested in doing and connecting it to the values of the company,” said Ellen Remmer, CEO of The Philanthropic Initiative Inc., a nonprofit that promotes strategic philanthropy and advises donors.