



The 3 P's of CSR Need a 4th.

Why To Add a Critical "Fourth P" to the Triple Bottom Line of Corporate Social Responsibility.

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As a CSR professional you've read about the triple bottom line of corporate social responsibility - or the 3 P's: Profit, People and Planet. On paper, it all makes perfect sense. When you look out for those three values, the impact to the bottom line should be positive through an improved corporate reputation, a stronger employment brand value proposition and of course a sustainable environment in which companies and people sustain life.

Everyone that is genuinely interested in corporate social responsibility already believes that the 3 P's are the start of an authentic CSR program. Yet, as I talk to many CSR professionals, a less obvious "fourth P" has emerged as the stealthy obstacle that holds them back from executing successful initiatives.

The fourth "P"? Practicality.

Without a practical way to implement socially responsibility initiatives they can stall, or worse, syphon resources and create negative attention from executives. Despite most CEO's agreeing that corporate social responsibility is critical to satisfying multiple stakeholders, nothing cools their fire faster than thinking it's a waste of time and money.



their sustainable technology initiatives and we've identified two strategies that are improving how they measure impact, tie it to the bottom line and garner deeper support for their efforts from the top down.

The first strategy [we're exploring](#) is **making at least some part of their CSR program directly reportable back to the bottom line because nothing says practical, like saving money.**

We help our partners [quantify the impact](#) of their electronics recycling and refurbishing by giving them transparent tracking of all recyclable materials (like raw minerals and rare earth), and a platform to resell their refurbished IT equipment back to their employees at a deep discount. Their IT department then uses the resale revenue as 'found money' to offset the cost of new equipment.

It's a win/win for CSR and IT. The corporate social responsibility team has a transparent, reportable way to prove closed loop recycling, with zero-impact on landfills. IT rests easy with secure data destruction and discovers budget relief for their desperately needed tech refresh.

The second strategy is gaining internal allies by becoming a strategic problem solver. We're helping another CSR professional turn her electronics recycling and refurbishing [into training dollars for IT](#) - it's brilliant. Not only is it an obvious win for both CSR and IT, but executive team members stand to benefit as well.

The win for the CIO: Right now, CIO's are aggressively focused on closing their skills gap, with nearly [three-quarters reporting](#) that talent/IT skills development and training will be absolutely critical or very important to their team in the next 5-8 years.

The win for HR and the business: Competition for tech talent has never been tougher. Universities can't turn out tech talent fast enough, and the best and brightest already on the market demand opportunity to grow their own skills. By helping the organization deepen their training budgets, HR can upskill existing talent, market a smarter employment value proposition for new talent and improve the employer brand for the organization.

In their HBR article, [The Link Between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility](#), authors Michael E Porter and Mark R. Kramer articulate the disconnect:

"...the prevailing approaches to CSR are so fragmented and so disconnected from business and strategy as to obscure many of the greatest opportunities for companies to benefit society. If, instead, corporations were to analyze their prospects for social responsibility using the same frameworks that guide their core business choices, they would discover that CSR can be much more than a cost, a constraint, or a charitable deed—it can be a source of opportunity, innovation, and competitive advantage."



initiatives. Start small and focus on the win/wins and you'll be surprised at how far they'll take you and your organization.

Steven Kaufman is the CEO of Urban Mining PBC - a technology company, focused on delivering [closed loop solutions](#) to the fastest growing waste stream in the world. Urban Mining PBC is the Southeast's only certified B-Corp and e-Stewards certified electronics recycler.

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