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Organizational Behavior

Case Study 4

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1. Why would some argue that the Gap exemplifies an ethical organization? Why would others disagree?
   1. The Gap has launched multiple campaigns surrounding its social responsibility. Through these campaigns, they have proven to their customers that they do have a dedication to CSR efforts. Some may argue that these campaigns are mere lip service to customers. A company of the magnitude of the Gap could be doing a lot more to give back.
2. What do you think the Gap needs to do to dispel criticisms of its (RED) campaign participation?
   1. They should begin by addressing the criticisms. They should have expanded the (RED) clothing line to be beyond just tee shirts. They should also create a better tagline for the campaign. They should partner with other organizations and donate maybe half their proceeds for a certain time or match what is donated through their customers. They should include influencer marketing and celebrity partnerships. The Gap should set explicit financial goals that are tangible for the company and update customers on progress.
3. Why does the author argue that Gap (RED) ads are problematic? What do you think?
   1. That it wasn’t very well throughout. They did not set feasible goals, just to ‘eliminate AIDS in Africa’, which at the time was not even medically possible. They also set up the campaign so that donations are not very likely, and even if those donations are gained, they likely won't make much of an impact on the issues they're trying to raise money for. I think that it was a good effort but poor execution. They should have focused on something more tangible than ending AIDS in Africa. They should also make it a lot easier for people to be aware of and purchase products for it.
4. What might be a better ad campaign?
   1. A better ad campaign would have been raising $100,000 for AIDS cure research. This would create an actual financial goal for the company. This also would go directly to an issue that could benefit from the money. They also should have a portion of all proceeds go to this for some extent of time. The Gap should match the individual donations made by customers without purchasing items from the line.
5. How can companies like the Gap strive to achieve socially responsible ideals without putting themselves at a competitive disadvantage? Is there a way to follow a “moral universalist” approach (Maynard, 2001) without falling victim to moral relativism necessitated in a competitive marketplace?
   1. They could partner with other philanthropic organizations. At the end of a season, they could donate all clothes they do not sell. They could select a month and donate a portion of their proceeds to a charity. They can also create lines that are more ethically sourced and created. In doing this, they will be able to diversify themselves in the market and not put themselves at a competitive disadvantage. They could also improve pay and benefits for their warehouse workers.
6. Can you think of other examples of cause marketing? Which were successful and which were not? Why? How is “success” defined?
   1. The main thing that comes to mind is the Tom’s shoes. The line was created so that when a pair of shoes were purchased from them, they would donate a pair of shoes. However, the company did end up doing some shady stuff later on, I would argue that this approach was overall successful. Most people I knew would wear them. At the time, if given the choice between them and another brand, I would pick them because I felt better about my purchase. I would argue that the success of this type of marketing is measured by consumers’ willingness to participate in the campaign.