TD Bank Social Responsibilities  
by Chuck Reeves

In today's market corporations image is even more important that was years ago. With today's economic climate, even more pressure exists for business’ to maintain a social responsibility policy. Most corporations create a social responsibility policy into their business plan this helps create positive impact for the business, resolve negative impact that may have come about from less scrupulous employees, or help with corporate accountability. In fact social responsibility is so important that some businesses have been able to create measuring stick so they can compare and contrast their corporate responsibility as the corporations.

While researching operations with her I had to pleasure to meet with the Assistant Vice President to TD Bank Michelle Zeiger. Michelle also sits on the board for the Suffolk County Coalition for Domestic Violence while working for TD Bank. She was able to direct me to the social programs that were created within the past three years. According to the responsibility home page, TD bank takes the following approach:

1. Investing in the long-term sustainable growth of our businesses;
2. Responding to the needs of our customers;
3. Investing in our employees;
4. Being more inclusive in our workplace and in our interactions with customers;
5. Contributing to and championing causes that matter to our employees, our customers and the communities we serve; and
6. Reducing our impact on the environment.

Step one “Investing in the long-term sustainable growth of our businesses” might seem selfish but consider this: in 2009 Commerce Bank was struggling to stay afloat (Even with federal bailout) , TD bank purchased the bank, updated all the systems, employed Commerce’s bank staff. The acquisition required that TD pay back part of the bailout subsidiaries and increased the stock owned by the federal government.

To become Carbon neutral, TD Bank introduced a new design of its branches. These branches will have %17 of its power come from solar panels that will be installed on the roof. A redesigned computer system reduces operational waste. Skylights that bring in natural light reduce the need to have the lights running. The main call center in Auburn ME is powered entirely by Green Energy and uses drought resistant plants to reduce water needs.

Coupled with: “Contributing to and championing causes that matter to our employees, our customers and the communities we serve”, TD Bank donated $14,000 to Scenic Hudson. An environmental group focused on protecting the Hudson River Valley landscape. Scenic Hudson was able to bring 700 school kids on field trips to help restore parts of the county and foster an appreciation of the environment.

TD encourages its employees to participate in social programs as well. Employees search out for community groups to support which then become backed by TD. One such case was “The ARC” in southern Florida. The ARC aims to help adults with disabilities with advocacy groups and, Medicaid Support programs.

With today’s economy, and the nature of media outlets, it is often hard to get the stories that support the growth and health of the community. One has to dig pretty deep to find out what programs corporations are sponsoring that not only help turn profit, but benefit the country as a whole. Stories of corrupt business heads makes for great news but foster a false idea that all business owners are out to increase profit margins or stock prices. With the sheer number of business’ that have solid social programs and are executing them, we cannot take the actions of a few individuals and make the standard template. We can see that a company can maintain a profit while at the same time, helping the country grow.