



Give & Grow Business with Purpose

Your 10-Minute Guide to
Creating a Sustainable
Social Enterprise

Elisabeth A. Williams

78% of people want companies to address important social justice issues.

87% will purchase a product because a company advocated for an issue they cared about.

7 in 10 Americans think companies have the obligation to take actions to improve issues that may not be directly relevant or related to their everyday business.

[2017 Cone Communications CSR Study](#)

You're probably wondering HOW your business can make a difference in the world.

It's easier than you might think:

The skills and passion you and your team possess that enable you to run a successful business are the same ones required to solve our most challenging social issues.

You want to make a difference, but something is holding you back. *What?*

Here's some great news:

You don't have to wait until you're well established or even profitable to incorporate social impact into your business mission.

Start now and watch your business grow as a result!

SHARING YOUR CARING

Using your business as a platform to endorse and further a cause you care about makes perfect sense. Heart-centered, mission-driven business leaders naturally infuse purpose into their brand's essence - sometimes without even realizing it.

It flows from the company's vision and mission and manifests itself in a myriad of ways:

- ❁ In their workplace culture
- ❁ How they treat team members
- ❁ The customer experience
- ❁ Interactions with suppliers/vendors
- ❁ The stand they take on social issues

When done right, it becomes a core component of your business model and a key competitive advantage.

It allows you to grow your business *and* positively impact the world – all at the same time.

Profit + People + Planet = Social Enterprise

And that's a win-win for your business, your customers, and humanity!

WHAT IS A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE?

While the definition of social enterprise keeps evolving, the Social Enterprise Alliance suggests this basic working definition:

“Organizations that address a basic unmet need or solve a social or environmental problem through a market-driven approach.”

Whatever issues you feel strongly about, you can incorporate into your business mission while including your team and customers in the effort for an even greater impact.

If you're a start-up, you can create a business model that prioritizes Profit + Purpose from the get-go.

Ask these 4 key questions:

1. What transformative product or service am I offering?
2. What population or market do I serve?
3. How does my product or service help people or the planet?
4. Can I employ individuals who have significant barriers to mainstream employment?

If you're already in business, you can choose to donate a portion of your profits (either a percentage or set dollar amount) to a non-profit organization addressing a cause about which you care deeply.

Make it clear to your customers that with every purchase *they are making a difference*. (Be sure to check with your accountant before implementing any give-back program.)

YOUR SMART SOCIAL IMPACT CHECKLIST

How can you truly start making an impact through your business and create a social enterprise that will be sustainable?

Use this checklist to ensure you're making a meaningful impact:

Be Intentional and Strategic:

Employees and customers want to know your efforts are authentic. Take time to plan out *why*, *how*, *what*, and *where* to share your resources. Commit to providing support for the long-term. Being consistently engaged with a cause increases the likelihood of making a meaningful impact.

Your *Why*: _____

Your *How/Engagement*: _____

Choose Your Cause Wisely:

If you're a solopreneur or have just a couple of employees, the easiest way to choose a cause is to follow your passion and/or that of your team members.

Or choose an issue you believe would be important to your customer base. Uncertain what that is? Find out – doing so can help you understand your customers on a deeper, more meaningful level.

Another option is to select a cause that aligns with the business you're in. For example, if you own a technology company, you might support initiatives to get more students involved in STEM through after-school programs.

Your *What*: _____

Identify the Organization:

Once you decide what cause or issue you want to support through your business, begin the process of identifying the best organization(s) to align yourself with. Selecting a local organization makes it easier to engage your employees in the effort, but you can always support at the national and international level as well through donations.

It's important to align your business with a *reputable* organization - one with standards such as those you hold yourself and your team to. So take some time to do your due diligence.

Your *Where*: _____

PROMOTE WITH A PURPOSE

Whether you're a start-up or a seasoned business executive, you want to share the good you are doing through your social impact initiatives.

 **Tell your story - people want to hear it!** 

Sharing a story can be challenging for some. Disclosing something personal can feel like you're putting yourself in a vulnerable position. You may be concerned it could be misconstrued as shameless self-promotion or that people might judge you negatively.

To the *contrary*, studies have shown storytelling is a very powerful tool to unite you with your customers and clients, to deepen your relationships with them, and to foster a greater sense of connection and understanding.

People want to know who you are and what matters to you. They want to know you're authentic, compassionate, and have passions that go beyond the boundaries of your business.

They want to do business with a real person they can *relate* to – not a cold, sterile, automated company. And they want to purchase products and services where they know their money is making a difference.

Bring your team members in on the process - it helps them feel connected and involved with the cause you support and fosters a sense of pride, meaning and fulfillment in their work. It also increases your success in attracting, engaging, and retaining top talent.

TAKE YOUR CAUSE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

In short, you want to share the story of your cause and the organizations addressing it effectively because this multiplies your impact and expands your reach.

The reality? **This is not about you.**

This is about an issue in society causing pain to people and/or our planet. It's a cause that needs attention. And you have the **platform** and the **power** to *do something* about it.

Think about this:

Even if you never gave a dime or volunteered your time – you can still have a significant impact just by using your voice to spotlight the issue(s) you care about.

Share:

1. **On Your Website**
2. **In Your Newsletter/Blog**
3. **On Your Social Media Channels**
4. **In Interviews and Media Opportunities**

**Get creative and have fun with this!
You just might inspire someone to join
you in the effort to change the world!**

NEXT STEPS: LET'S GET GIVING

**As a heart-centered, mission-driven entrepreneur
I know you want to make a difference in the world.**

You want to use **your gifts and talents** to ease the pain of those who suffer.

You want to **make the world a better place** for generations to come.

You want to **use the knowledge and skills** you've acquired to assist those who are working in the trenches to find solutions to society's greatest challenges.

And you can! *Let's chat...*

Schedule your **FREE 30-Minute Coaching Session** today and
let's get you started on the journey to **AWE-thentic Impact!**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Elisabeth "Lis" Williams is the founder of AWE Partners, LLC, a social enterprise that educates women on how to give, invest, and shop for impact from a place of authenticity. The firm works closely with female entrepreneurs and executives who desire to infuse mission into their life and business for more passion, purpose, and profit!

Reach Lis at Lis@AWEPartners.com



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