



Sabine Steinbrecher, August 2023

## **The Profit for A Cause Revolution: Transforming Businesses with Purpose**

In today's business landscape, the concept of generating profit for the sake of profit is undergoing a transformation. The traditional dichotomy between profit and purpose is being challenged by a visionary approach called "profit for a cause." This paradigm shift champions the idea that profitability can coexist with social impact, ushering in a new era where businesses become drivers of positive change.

### **What is the 'Profit for a Cause' Philosophy?**

In contrast to the struggles faced by non-profits relying on donations, the 'profit for a cause' philosophy emerges as a dynamic alternative. By eschewing the constraints of a donation-based model, this philosophy embraces the power of profit generation as a means to fuel social impact. Rather than adopting a non-profit approach, this mindset focuses on leveraging profit to drive change.

### **The Triple Bottom Line:**

The "triple bottom line" model serves as a model for the profit for a cause revolution. Unlike the conventional single bottom line focused solely on financial gains, the triple bottom line encompasses 3 key pillars:

1. **Profitable Business Performance:** The core business endeavors to create value for customers, driving financial success and sustainability.
2. **Social Mission Integration:** A portion of the generated profits is directed towards a purpose-driven social mission that aligns with the company's values.
3. **Self-Sustaining Impact:** The social mission is designed to be self-sustaining, generating its income and profits, which are then reinvested for growth and sustainability.

For example, in our company we provide our customers with educational technology, content production and online delivery designed to accelerate results and business growth (1<sup>st</sup> bottom line). We invest 3% of revenue from all education sales into our social mission supporting and saving honeybees (2<sup>nd</sup> bottom line). Our first initiative is a bee sanctuary that we intend to expand into more sanctuaries, training for beekeepers, research, and training about apitherapy. Our first sanctuary product is honey-themed gift boxes and 100% of the profits are reinvested in our social mission (3<sup>rd</sup> bottom line).

Imagine how impactful this triple bottom line ecosystem could be if more companies adopted this.

# How Incorporating a Profitable Cause Can Empower Your Career, Your Business, Your Life and Transform The World

The empowerment derived from a social mission unfolds on multiple levels:

1. **Mission-Driven Business:** A business with a purpose-driven mission aligns passion with profession, creating a meaningful connection between your career and your personal values.
2. **Amplified Impact:** Aligning your business with a social mission amplifies your impact, magnifying your contributions to society while enhancing your brand's reputation.
3. **Innovation Catalyst:** A social mission sparks innovation, fostering creative solutions to societal and environmental challenges, positioning your business as a force for positive change.
4. **Engaged Workforce:** A compelling social mission engages employees on a deeper level, fostering a sense of purpose and connection to their work.
5. **Strategic Differentiation:** Infusing a social mission sets your business apart in a competitive landscape, resonating with consumers and stakeholders who value companies committed to making a positive difference.
6. **Partnerships and Collaboration:** A shared social mission facilitates partnerships and collaborations with like-minded organizations, expanding your reach and impact.

## What are the Stats on the Importance of Social Mission to Consumers and Success?

The statistics reaffirm the pivotal role of a social mission in business success:

1. **Consumer Surveys:** A majority of consumers prefer to support companies with a social mission. Studies indicate that 87% of consumers would purchase from a company advocating for an issue they care about.
2. **Millennial and Gen Z Preferences:** Younger generations favor socially responsible companies. Approximately 87% of millennials believe business success should encompass more than financial performance.
3. **Brand Loyalty:** A strong social mission fosters customer loyalty, with 64% of consumers making choices based on a brand's social or political stance.
4. **Positive Public Perception:** Companies with a social mission enjoy positive public perception, with 55% of global online consumers willing to pay more for products and services aligned with positive social and environmental impact.
5. **Social Media Influence:** Social media amplifies support or boycotts based on a company's social mission, impacting reputation and bottom line.
6. **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Alignment:** Companies aligned with UN's SDGs resonate with consumers, with 62% of consumers wanting companies to take a stand on relevant issues.

## Successful Companies with Strong Social Missions

Noteworthy companies that exemplify the profit for a cause philosophy include:

- **Lush Cosmetics:** Ethical sourcing, cruelty-free products, and environmental advocacy

- Mountain Equipment Co-op: Prioritize responsible environmental practices.
- Roots: Supports local communities through environmentally conscious products.
- Ten Tree Clothing: Reforestation 'tree planting' through product sales.
- The Body Shop: Cruelty-free beauty and fair trade through ethically-sourced products.
- Patagonia: Champions environmental causes and sustainability.
- Ben & Jerry's: Integrates social and environmental responsibility
- TOMS: Operates under a "One for One" model, donating a pair of shoes with each purchase
- Warby Parker: Contributes to communities in need, emphasizing accessible vision care.

## Profit for a Cause and Charitable Organizations

In addition to businesses, charitable organizations have adopted profit for a cause models. There is one great story we all know and love that illustrates this particularly well. While most charities are always scrambling for donations the Girl Scouts of America and Girl Guides of Canada long ago came up with a very different model. What are they famous for - cookies! In 1917 in USA and 1927 in Canada the girls sold their first cookies to fundraise. Perfect idea to raise money with a profitable product. What a wonderful fundraising tool but also such a strong branding tool. Those cookies at that certain time of year are in a lot of homes and bellies. And profit returns to the organization to sustain them year after year. Each year, the Girl Scouts sell around 200 million cookies raking in about \$800 million. A Girl Scout troop earns at least 80 cents per box of cookies sold. Currently, there are about 2.5 million girl and adult members worldwide. In Canada the Girl Guides did over \$12M in cookie sales in 2022. In the last 100 years, 7 million Canadian girls and women have been involved in Guiding. That's massive impact and a great illustration of how a charity can implement profit for a cause.

## Steps to Align Goals with a Meaningful Social Purpose

Transforming business goals to align with a meaningful social purpose involves several strategic steps:

1. Define Your Social Purpose: Identify a cause that resonates with your values and strengths.
2. Leadership Commitment: If you are not the leader, secure leadership buy-in to drive integration of the social purpose.
3. Stakeholder Engagement: Engage with employees, customers, investors, and communities to understand societal needs.
4. Assess Current Practices: Evaluate current practices to identify areas for positive impact.
5. Set Measurable Goals: Establish specific, achievable goals that align with your chosen purpose.
6. Incorporate Social Purpose: Integrate the social purpose into your business strategy, mission, and values.
7. Product Innovation: Develop products and services that address social or environmental challenges.
8. Employee Engagement: Involve employees in initiatives that support the social purpose.
9. Partnerships and Collaboration: Collaborate with like-minded organizations to amplify impact.
10. Transparency and Communication: Communicate your commitment transparently to stakeholders.
11. Training and Education: Provide training to employees to foster understanding and ownership.
12. Continuous Improvement: Regularly review and adapt initiatives to stay aligned with evolving challenges.
13. Impact Measurement: Establish systems to measure and evaluate impact.
14. Avoid Greenwashing: Ensure authenticity in your commitment
15. Long-Term Perspective: Approach your social purpose as a long-term commitment.

By following these steps, your business can effectively align its goals with a meaningful social purpose, contributing positively to society while also enhancing its brand and reputation.

Hint: It's so much easier to align everything in your world so start by looking at what you are already passionate about. What are you already doing every day in your life or in your business. Decide to establish a cause that is extremely meaningful to you and it's going to resonate with your audience.

## Define Your Personal Social Passion

Discovering your personal social purpose requires introspection:

- Reflect on societal issues that resonate.
- Consider your values, experiences, and skills.
- Envision the change you want to create.
- Evaluate alignment with your personal and professional life.

Consider taking our [Find Your Social Passion Quiz](#) below.

## Supporting Organizations

Organizations like B Corp Certification, 1% for the Planet, and Imagine Canada Caring Companies Certification assist in aligning profit with purpose.

## The Power of Your Social Mission on Your Business and Your Legacy

Your social mission shapes your business by:

- Enhancing your brand's reputation
- Providing content, content, content! What a great source of content and communication for your clients or prospects
- Creating a loyal customer base
- Transforming your biz to a force for positive change
- Driving innovation that inspires creative solutions to social and environmental challenges
- Attracting and retaining top talent
- Customer and employee engagement
- Creating partnerships and collaborations with like-minded organizations
- Differentiating your business
- Supporting income, revenue, growth

Your social mission shapes your personal legacy by:

- Enabling meaningful contributions.
- Inspiring others.
- Reflecting values and beliefs.
- Impacting communities.
- Garnering respect and recognition.
- Leaving a lasting, positive mark.

Embrace a social mission to empower your legacy through positive change and inspire future generations.

## About the Author

Sabine Steinbrecher is the CEO and Founder of Hiveologie Accelerated Learning and the Hiveologie Honeybee Sanctuary in the Finger Lakes, NY. With a passion for redefining business success through social impact, Sabine focuses on profit for a cause. Hiveologie supports honeybees through educational technology and invests in their social mission to save honeybees. To contribute, explore their honey-themed gift boxes at [www.hiveologie.com/savethebees](http://www.hiveologie.com/savethebees) or check out their real estate training programs at [www.Hiveologie.com](http://www.Hiveologie.com).

# Find Your Social Passion Quiz

Defining your social purpose requires introspection and a deep understanding of your values, interests, and areas where you can make a meaningful impact. Here are some questions to help you clarify what social purpose you are most passionate about. Answering these questions thoughtfully can help you identify the social purpose that aligns best with your passions, values, and strengths. Remember that finding your social purpose is a journey, and your answers may evolve as you continue to explore and learn.

## 1. What societal issues resonate with me deeply?

Consider the causes, challenges, or issues that evoke strong emotions in you. These could be related to poverty, education, healthcare, environmental sustainability, human rights, or more.

## 2. What are my personal values and principles?

Reflect on your core values, beliefs, and principles. Consider how these align with certain social issues and guide your decisions.

## 3. What experiences have influenced me?

Think about experiences in your life that have had a significant impact on you. These could be positive or negative experiences related to societal issues.

## 4. Which global or local challenges concern me the most?

Identify the challenges that you believe are urgent and deserving of attention. Are there issues that you can't ignore due to their gravity?

## 5. What skills and talents do I possess?

Assess your skills, talents, and expertise. How could these be applied to address specific social issues?

**6. What change do I want to see in the world?**

Envision the kind of positive change you want to contribute to. This could be improved access to education, environmental conservation, equal rights, etc.

**7. Whose lives do I want to impact?**

Consider the individuals or groups of people you want to help. Is there a specific demographic or community you feel particularly connected to?

**8. What is the legacy I want to leave behind?**

Think about the mark you want to make on the world. How do you want to be remembered for your contributions to society?

**9. What do I enjoy doing in my free time?**

Your hobbies and interests can sometimes reveal areas you are passionate about. For example, if you enjoy volunteering at animal shelters, it might indicate a passion for animal welfare.

**10. What social purpose aligns with my professional expertise?**

Consider how your career skills and industry expertise could be leveraged to create positive change in a particular area.

**11. What issues keep me up at night?**

Think about the issues that you find yourself constantly thinking about or discussing with others. These could be indicators of your deep passion.

**12. Am I willing to commit time and effort to this cause?**

Passion often requires commitment. Assess whether you're willing to invest time, energy, and resources into a particular social purpose.

**13. What impact do I want to make in the short term and long term?**

Define the specific outcomes you hope to achieve in both the immediate future and over a longer period.

**14. How can I align my personal and professional life with this purpose?**

Consider how you can integrate your passion into various aspects of your life, including your career, hobbies, and relationships.

**15. Am I open to learning and evolving as I pursue this purpose?**

Social issues can be complex and multifaceted. Being open to learning, adapting, and collaborating with others is important for making a meaningful impact.