

The 5P's that will define the future shareholders' jobs

 By [Carmen Murray](#)

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"For CEOs who only focus on shareholders, let them be warned, they will not be CEOs very long." said Marc Benioff, Salesforce co-CEO in a recent interview with CNBC. The billionaire entrepreneur said CEOs have to adopt a wider perspective that includes the well-being of community stakeholders such as employees, public schools, people who are homeless and communities writ large.



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The PR stunt age is over

“ *“More and more I have come to the conclusion that a principle isn't a principle until it costs you money.” Bill Bembach.* ”

It's not an uncommon practice to see businesses take advantage of a trending conversation or an awareness day, week or month to hop on the bandwagon, yet too often we have to ask, are their backyards clean? A great example: How many times have companies boasted about planting trees on Arbor Day in the attempt to save the planet, yet their lack of resource management and plastic packaging contradicts that action. These PR stunts are vacuous and have no meaning and a ripple effect on the entire well-being of the business.



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Today, organisations are judged by their ability to put their money where their mouth is. People judge companies not by one effort, but continuous efforts to do good business. Often we forget consumers come to a gradual realisation that this is not the kind of business they will support. It's not one single moment, but all of the moments in between that results in the position businesses find themselves in today.

A series of bad decisions over the years have left organisations in a state of panic because they are not willing to let go of the legacy system that is destroying profits and cultures. Seeping into the consumer market, leading to death and decline of organisations.

The 5P's that ultimately will define the future of the shareholders' jobs are Purpose, People, Planet, Privacy, and Profit. Let's unpack them:

Purpose

Too many businesses are obsessed with the bottom line and ultimately, this leads to toxic cultures, bad customer experiences and an entire business ecosystem that can't sustain itself for the future. It is paramount that organisations fortify themselves in strong values and know what they stand for.

Like with people, I believe the same to be true for businesses. For example, if you don't know what your values are and what you stand for, you will make many bad decisions in your life. When opportunities present itself, you will be like a feather in the wind, chasing one thing after the other, ending up saying yes to things that are not good for your wellbeing. This leads to a scattered and unhappy life and having to deal with things you wished you turned away.

This is exactly what happens with businesses. The core values are not defined to serve the entire business ecosystem, but the shareholders only. This leads to a disregard for resource management from what is taken out of the planet to how we treat our staff. Cruel cultures, lack of substance, bad service, unhappy customers. Even your best suppliers will leave you for a competitor at a drop of a hat.

The purpose is the ability to stand for something far bigger than yourself, far bigger than your business. Something magical happens when you lead a true purpose-driven business and there are many insights and reports to prove this to be true.

People

“*When an egg cracks from the outside it means death. When egg cracks from the inside out, it means life.*” ”

To serve people is to serve everyone in your organisation first. When in danger, first put on your oxygen mask, then help others. Change happens from the bottom up and not the other way around. From the cleaner to the top management. If you are unable to serve the people within your organisation this will not bring life to your business, customers, and communities.

“*Clients do not come first, employees come first. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of your clients.*” Richard Branson. ”

There is a tremendous rise in corporate bullying in the workplace and we are witnessing cultures that are so destructive to its people. Depression, mental illnesses and suicides. Breaking up of families. The list goes on and on. Many narcissistic leaders are putting business health and its people at risk. People that are bad for your culture, no matter how

good they are, needs to be fired.

We are witnessing businesses radically trying to turn things around and being focussed on customer experiences. The reality is excellent customer experiences is a result of what is happening within the business.

“*“Maybe you are searching among the branches, for what only appears in the roots ” - Rumi*”

Planet

Greta Thunberg, a climate activist, has caught the worlds' attention. She started a school strike outside the Swedish parliament to call on politicians, policymakers, government officials, and businesses to get their act together for the sake of our planet and the future generations.

The “Greta effect” has inspired many investors and millions of people across the globe to start the dialogue and to call for change and awareness of an eco-friendly culture. Never has this topic been more prevalent. Businesses are running out of time and radically need to rethink their planet policies to ensure profitability in the future.

Customers are demanding environmental credentials, drastic plastic reductions and a call for businesses to stay within the emissions budgets. This requires a CEO dedicated to the demands of planet earth and to expedite policies put in place.

Privacy

The reckless invasion of privacy by tech giants is on the radar many people and an undercurrent of concern is making its way to the surface as more and more people share their stories of how their conversations are listened to, and relevant ads are sent within seconds.

Futurist, Bronwyn Williams from Flux Trends said recently at the #UJMarketingFit Experience: “It’s surveillance capitalism and this is not the future that we are signing up for, and ultimately it boils down to customers voting with their wallets”



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As a specialist in data science and analysis, its alarming to witness the “spooky” practice of businesses when it comes to data. It’s an incredible tool to use if it is to serve value to its customers. Businesses should go beyond what is required to protect the data subject at all costs. This requires ethical leadership to enforce data privacy policies.



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Respecting people's data sovereignty is the only way to maintain trust and exploiting peoples vulnerabilities and privacy to gain access to a consumer is the path that will eventually lead to the apocalypse of many businesses.

Profit

If shareholders enforce effective resource management, values, and processes (RVP's) it will yield results, maybe not in the short term but in the long term. It will engender trust, a sense of belonging and a positive impact on the planet and society.

There are over 10,000 companies in the world, from over 65 countries, across 150 industries that have volunteered to undergo a strict audit process every 2-3 years to certify that they are a force for good by [B Corporation](#). These businesses have the stamp of approval that they are not only good for the people but good for the planet.

Last year in an article by [The Grocer UK](#), they learned that: "Businesses certified as B Corps grew 28 times faster than UK GDP in the past 12 months, according to new research from the non-profit organisation.

Average year-on-year growth across the 150 UK businesses signed up to B Corp, a global network of sustainable companies, was 14% in the past year compared with 0.5% growth in GDP at the start of 2018. A third (35%) of certified UK companies said they had attracted new audiences since joining up, it found, while almost half (48%) found that prospective staff had been attracted to the business specifically because it was a B Corp."

In closing

For businesses to thrive, it requires a shareholder that truly lives and breathes these 5P's. Consumers are demanding a positive change in the world. It's time to get out of the cheap seats and get into the arena and ensure the well-being of the business ecosystem by focussing on the purpose, people, planet, privacy, and its profits.

In today's world, the power lies with the consumer. They base decisions on their values and expectations, and they vote with their wallets. That's why it is more important than ever to listen to what they are saying.

ABOUT CARMEN MURRAY

Carmen Murray is one of the most influential modern marketers in South Africa. Her strong background in content, digital, mobile, innovation, and data analytics allows her to identify emerging trends and conceptualise disruptive communication strategies deployed with precision. The customer and their needs are always at the heart of her approach.

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