



# VanHoutum

## CSR tips and tricks



## Corporate Social Responsibility – tips and tricks

Doing business in accordance with CSR and making profit at the same time. How do you do that? And what things should you avoid doing at all costs?

The tips and tricks of our CSR Academy below will certainly help you out.

***They also give you a behind-the-scenes look into how we operate at Van Houtum: we show you how our organisation applies each tip in practice.***

Because that is also an essential element of successful CSR policy: sincere and open sharing of knowledge and skills in the field of applying CSR in business.

### Tip 1

**Don't view CSR as something you can do 'on the side': make sure you apply CSR in close proximity to your organisation's core activities and make it part of those activities.**



*We are firmly convinced that disposable products may only be produced using recycled fibres. Which is why we have used 100% recycled paper as a raw material for more than 50 years. In 2010, we took this a step further and developed **Satino Black, the world's first and only toilet paper that is Cradle to Cradle certified.***

*However, Satino Black is not just a product that we have made commercially available, it is a complete Cradle to Cradle concept that helps customers to achieve their sustainability objectives.*

### Tip 2

**Create focus by formulating a CSR policy: select a number of specific themes that fit the organisation.**



*Healthy people radiate vitality. They look cheerful, they get things done seemingly effortlessly and are pleasant company. It's great to feel vital, both at a personal level and for those around you. Which is why we have a strong focus on **vitality management.***

*And our staff has also picked up this theme with great enthusiasm. Runners have formed a company team and run in competitions together and the mountain bikers meet up to ride strenuous routes.*

### Tip 3

**Mobilise the external environment: for example, don't be afraid to make demands on suppliers and enter into a CSR dialogue with them.**



*Our purchase policy includes reviewing how suppliers perform in terms of their environmental impact and working conditions. 98% of our purchases comes from Europe.*

*We **challenged** our existing **suppliers** to play a role in the development of our Satino Black products. Many of them decided to participate enthusiastically.*

*We also encourage paper producers and printers to introduce Cradle to Cradle in their operational management to ensure that our most important raw material, recovered paper, no longer contains harmful substances.*

### Tip 4

**Set appealing goals in the area of CSR, for example: 'We want to be climate-neutral in 2015'.**



*Ten years ago we had approximately 20 accidents that resulted in time off work each year. We found that unacceptable. That is why we set up and implemented an intensive safety programme in which the directors and staff accepted joint responsibility for resolving and preventing unsafe situations. Our goal: within a period of five years, **no more accidents resulting in work disability**. That has succeeded.*

*Because we have implemented our ambitious plan in a structured way across the whole company, our staff returns home happy and healthy at the end of each day.*

### Tip 5

**Increase CSR awareness among staff: for example, by organising activities such as a Sustainable Tuesday.**



*Van Houtum and the river Swalm have been neighbours for more than 75 years; the river is indispensable to the process of manufacturing hygienic paper. We are happy to do something in return: we have created a **green corridor** between the river Swalm and the factory where butterflies, insects and birds feel totally at ease and at home.*

*The corridor was **landscaped by our own staff** and their families who planted large numbers of shrubs and hedgerows. While ploughing and digging, many colleagues had an opportunity to get to know each other better in a completely different, green, setting.*

### Tip 6

**Do not simply invest in People and Planet without carefully considering the added value of those investments for the organisation: Profit.**



*Satino Black is our organisation's flagship. At the moment, the turnover percentage lies below 10%, but we expect this to grow to 25 to 30% within a few years. This expectation is supported by the results up until now: **turnover has doubled every six months since the introduction.***

*Satino Black has resulted in steadily increasing media attention. This free publicity is invaluable to both the organisation and the product: editorial publicity is after all much more credible than an advertisement.*

### Tip 7

**Ensure a steady flow of internal communication so that all your staff members understand what CSR means for the organisation and what the goal is.**



*Corporate Social Responsibility is in our DNA; it is part of who we are as an organisation. We constantly publicise this theme in our internal communication. Satino Black is our showpiece product in this area. Structured internal communication keeps our staff informed and up-to-date with developments. They contribute ideas and put them into practice. All aspects of the way we think and act promote CSR. Consequently, **our employees** are also **true ambassadors** for Van Houtum and Satino Black.*

### Tip 8

**Call attention to employees with good initiatives in the area of CSR by rewarding them or publicising their activities within the company.**



*In 2010, operator Mohan Ramachandra started to sweep the car park outside the processing factory once a week on his own initiative. Since then, the car park, which is one of the company's main visiting cards, always looks neat and tidily kept. So we decided to publish Mohan's **story in our newsletter along with a photograph.** As a token of thanks for his contribution.*

*But also to show that there are more than enough opportunities to think of ideas and put them into practice. We stimulate entrepreneurship at every level. Which explains why our organisation has a flat structure where everybody works closely with everybody else.*

## Tip 9

**Rather than ignoring stakeholders enter into a dialogue with them: work together and learn from each other.**



*Continual dialogue with stakeholders is an important element of CSR. We have developed a **stakeholder communication matrix** especially for this. This matrix identifies the stakeholders, assigns priorities and defines topics for dialogue. These aspects are matched to those responsible for the dialogue, dialogue time windows and forms of communication. The Netherlands Standardization Institute, NEN, has included our matrix as an example of good practice in its publication called 'The implementation of CSR; Practical business cases and tools for ISO 26000'.*

## Tip 10

**Be transparent about the organisation's CSR results: draw up and publish a CSR report. This is an excellent motivational tool.**



*We have published an annual report on our organisation's performance for nearly 20 years now. We send it to all our stakeholders.*

*We adopted the guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative, the international standard for CSR reporting, for the first time in 2010. The **CSR report** informs our stakeholders of our goals and our results in the area of sustainability and, furthermore, allows us to achieve the level of openness that we find so important. Every two years, we also hold a session combined with a **company tour** for neighbouring residents in order to explain the report.*

**As you can see, doing business in accordance with Corporate Social Responsibility and making profits at the same time are not at all incompatible.**

- For example, initiatives for **reducing your environmental footprint** generate immediate profit because they have been proven to offer an **almost immediate payback**.
- In addition, **consumers** are growing increasingly critical and are very well informed: businesses that operate in accordance with CSR clearly satisfy a **need**. That pays for itself.
- Furthermore, people like to work for a company that truly embraces CSR. A **pleasant working climate and atmosphere are motivating**, thereby reducing sickness absenteeism and staff turnover.

**All very beneficial for your bottom line!**