



Soul of the Next Economy Forum

2017 Executive Roundtable Summary Report



INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

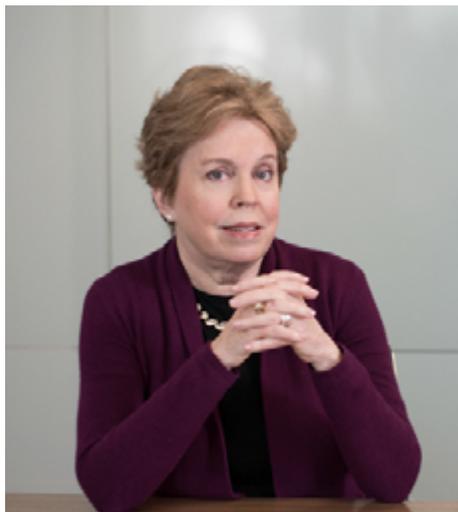
Since 2015, the Soul of the Next Economy Forum has featured an Executive Roundtable. Each year, this event has proven to be a valuable part of the two day Forum and has left participants with informative takeaways and action points. The goal of this Roundtable event has been to bring together diverse leaders in the business community with non-profit sectors, government, indigenous communities and educational institutions to discuss corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the role business has in enhancing communities both locally and globally.

The event started with a welcome message from Joe Ceci, Alberta's Minister of Finance, followed by comments from the Roundtable's moderator, Linda Coady, Chief Sustainability Officer at Enbridge. Forum attendees were then invited to engage in conversations and share perspectives around key aspects of social responsibility during face-to-face discussions with business and community leaders. After the small group discussions, the moderator was joined by panelists Jim Dewald, Paul Wright and Karen Young, who summarized key topics and notable takeaways.

The Roundtable concluded with a keynote address on Frontiers in Social Responsibility by Wayne Visser.



*Joe Ceci - Minister of Finance
Opening the Forum & Executive Roundtable*



*Linda Coady
Chief Sustainability Officer, Enbridge Inc.
Moderator - Executive Roundtable*



*Wayne Visser
Friday Keynote Speaker
Frontiers in Social Responsibility*



*Paul Wright
Black Diamond Group*



*Jim Dewald
University of Calgary*



*Karen Young
United Way*

Our Roundtable hosts included business leaders from a wide range of industries including oil & gas, sport, broadcasting, transportation, food service, financial and legal, along with leaders from government, academic institutions and both local & international non-profits.

2017 Table Hosts:



*Alex MacWilliam
Denton's*



*Carolyn Martin
Sponsor Energy*



*Catherine Brownlee
CBI*



*Colin Jackson
ImagiNation 150*



*Corey Janvier
SCI North*



*Court Ellingson
Calgary Economic
Development*



*David
Mason-Roberston
LNG Canada*



*David Sayson
Just Aquaponics*



*James Thangaraj
Innovate Calgary*



*Jeff Bowling
Canadian Western
Bank*



*Jim Dewald
University of
Calgary*



*Joni Avram
Cause & Effect
Marketing*



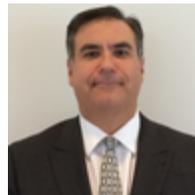
*Karen Young
United Way*



*Laurence Nguyen
CN Rail*



*Leighton Healey
Bootkik*



*Mario Sciliano
Canada's Sports
Hall of Fame*



*Matt Beck
Imaginea Energy*



*Mel Wilson
M.J. Wilson &
Associates*



*Mike Deboski
Deboski &
Company*



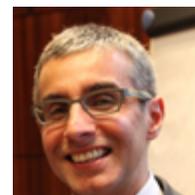
*Paul Wright
Black Diamond
Group*



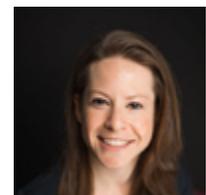
*Penny Favel
TransCanada*



*Scott Crockatt
Calgary Chamber*



*Shane Jaffer
Alberta International
Development
Office, Government
of Alberta*



*Shannon Doram
YMCA*



*Shiela Carruthers
CBSR*



*Simon Lewchuk
World Vision*



*Tara Weber
BNN*



*Terry Beckman
Athabasca
University*



*Usman Tahir
Chirp Foods /
McDonald's*



*Yvonne Jeffery
Vermillion Energy*



*Jim Button
Village Brewery /
Evans Hunt Group*



*Robert Schulz
University of
Calgary*

"There are 5 principles for where CSR is going: creativity, scalability, responsive, locality, and circularity"

- Wayne Visser

ROUND 1: SCANNING THE LANDSCAPE - SHIFTING DISCUSSIONS, CHANGING PRACTICES & CREATIVE INITIATIVES

The first round of the Executive Roundtable had forum attendees discussing ways that organizations have shifted the discussion of CSR to include sustainable business in social innovation, as well discussing changing practices or creative initiatives they have seen in their industries in recent years.

Part of the discussions focused first on WHY there have been shifts and changing practices. *Highlights included:*

- Increased awareness of CSR and social responsibility leading to cultural shifts and changing expectations by job seekers, employees, communities investors and influencers
- Seeing obvious benefits and impacts both financially and through work satisfaction, including positive mental health
- Some organizations shifting to maintain or build their reputation/image and to improve accountability

Moving beyond the why, tables discussed general and specific examples of creative initiatives that they have observed. *General examples included:* empowerment of workers and communities, moving away from charity and hand-outs, willingness by companies to give employees time off for volunteering, making giving back part of the way individuals make a living, offering flexible work spaces and schedules, increasing diversity and listening to multiple voices in the community, long-term planning rather than short-term donations, ensuring leadership embodies CSR values, increased collaboration, and encouraging and rewarding innovation.

Specific examples included:

- LNG Canada educating their workers about CSR and supporting employees as community volunteers
- CRIEC working on programs that aim to retrain rather than replace immigrant professionals and implementing mentorship programs
- Alberta Health Services looking at addiction and mental health together rather than separately
- Enbridge establishing a CSR committee and entering the early phases of improving sustainability in their supply chains
- U of C establishing a sustainability office
- BDC developing their “What Matters Most” tool and promoting businesses involved in social entrepreneurship
- City of Calgary and United Way providing funding to Poverty Talks!
- Ambrose University and other academic institutions incorporating CSR themes into curriculum
- Builders designing LEED certified buildings even when not required to
- TransCanada’s CEO living out values

“Millenials won’t settle just for working in a corporate silo and are really looking for outcome based solutions in an integrative way that will show some measurable results”

- Karen Young

Questions asked during the moderated Roundtable discussions:

Has your organization shifted its discussion of CSR to include a purposeful emphasis on sustainable business and social innovation or is it still primarily about philanthropy and compliance?

Looking more broadly at sustainable business, what changing business practices or creative initiatives have you seen in recent years in your industry or in other industries that you observe?

How are your organization’s responsible business practises and initiatives strengthening the work environment?

What are the challenges as new initiatives and changing practices add additional stress on the resources of the organization?

How does the emphasis on new technology and other innovations distract from or support responsible business efforts?

How can industry work with government, non-profits and academic institutions to contribute to these efforts?

What is on the horizon for your organization next year in the area of CSR in all of its forms - community investment, responsible business practices and global sustainability generally?

How do you tell the story about your progress and the challenges in strengthening your industry and the world we live in?

The final area of discussion during Round 1 focused on some of the challenges that organizations still face related to CSR. *These included:*

- Despite the shift, employees don't necessarily see it - leadership needs to embody the values
- Involving everyone in the discussion and negotiations
- Raising funds for non-profits as a barrier to scaling a social enterprise
- CSR and sustainability should not just be about doing charity - we need to ask, "How can we meaningfully help the community?"

ROUND 2: WORK ENVIRONMENT, TECHNOLOGY & COLLABORATION

In Round 2, the primary focus was on the work environment, technology and collaboration. Tables discussed examples of ways responsible business practices and initiatives strengthen the work environment as well as the challenges of doing such. The most common points centered on the integration of values and practices into all aspects of policies and processes, employee training and education, and leadership.

It was suggested that the *first* step in ensuring that responsible business practices strengthen the work environment and have real influence in an organization, is to write them down and incorporate the values and practices in the mission statement of the organization. *After this*, it was suggested that organizations should focus on their employees - from listening to what is important to them, to ensuring that the organization's practices and values are tied to employee performance, as well as providing incentives and accountability to ensure integration and acceptance. Attendees *also* stressed the importance of education, training and encouragement. This included safety training, reviews of performance, skills training, awareness and leadership development. The *final point* on this topic centered around organization leadership and the importance of being authentic and setting examples. **CSR need to be "less like a badge (i.e. greenwashing) and more woven into the fabric of the organization."**

During the discussions, a number of suggestions for integrating responsible business practices and strengthening the work environment were made, *including:*

- Periodic evaluations of stakeholder/employee performance against the mission statement
- Incentives for employees through profit sharing
- Involve more people - this leads to better ideas, more acceptance and engagement
- Boundaries and know when to say no (develop a real vision and mission and stick to it)
- Encourage employees to start their own initiatives
- Report and publish reports on the impact of CSR
- Improve the skills of people in the community where they operate - this benefits the company and the whole community
- Provide funding for safety confidence
- Don't just *tolerate*, rather EMBRACE diversity

Tables also looked at the challenges that new initiatives and changing practices can place on an organization *including:*

- Business disruption - not every organization does a good job of implementing
- Finding the language of 'social' and 'green' can take time
- People may see additional risks
- Learning the new approaches can be a challenge for some - people are afraid of change
- For some companies, CSR is a novelty or something to make them look good, but they are not prepared to, nor know how to, integrate CSR to such a point where it simply becomes how the organization operates. This can lead to loss of employees, lower productivity and less loyalty
- Meeting expectations can be a challenge for employees, leadership and non-profits that work with organizations
- Charity is not sustainable





The second area of discussion was around technology and innovation and whether it supports or distracts from responsible business efforts. For the most part, attendees felt that technology had equal pros and cons.

How does technology support responsible business efforts?

- Helps to easily find intellectual/international support
- Improves communication
- Increases awareness
- Promotes quick feedback in real-time
- Supports long-term tracking and measuring impacts
- Connects to people and culture
- Enables calculations and improves reporting

How does technology distract from responsible business efforts?

- Frustration from frequent upgrades
- Divide between those that have access and those that do not
- Isolation and a feeling of always trying to 'catch up'
- Can cause us to lose out on human element and social connection - people need to be present!

Ultimately, the importance of putting people first was stressed - technology has a place, but organizations need to take care of people first and find ways to ensure that people do not become frustrated, isolated, divided and distracted.

“For every force of fragmentation, we have a force of integration that creates a more positive outlook for CSR. They are: continuity, networking, equity through access economy, restoration, well-being.”

- Wayne Visser

The final part of the Round 2 discussion focused on COLLABORATION - ways that industry can work with government, non-profits and academic institutions to contribute to responsible business efforts. The *key points* of this discussion were around: collaborations, partnerships, sharing of information, providing financial support and access to grants. However, with regards to financial support, some attendees had dissenting views, stressing the need to move away from a charitable model of just providing funds without additional value or understanding of the needs of the communities involved. In addition, there can be challenges with working together: competing interests sometimes do not align and charities may not be able to adequately meet expectations.

Specific points included:

- When academia and industry partner, both sides gain resources - industry gives knowledge/experience and academia provides volunteer experiences
- Non-profits and academia can benefit from working with local business and entrepreneurs
- Academic institutions could be a catalyst for social enterprise start-ups
- When initiating social change - think in terms of three generations
- Listen to the people you are trying to serve
- Build partnerships - more value, not just money

ROUND 3: LOOKING TO THE FUTURE AND SHARING THE STORY

Discussions in Round 3 focused on sharing what organizations are planning for the coming year in the area of CSR in all its forms as well as ways that they will share their stories of progress and their stories of challenge.

In general, organizations shared that they were planning to:

- Engage in meaningful interface or connections that create positive impacts
- Champion heroes
- Invest in safety
- Engage personally with organizations as opposed to simply investing money
- Help students engage in social innovation
- Use social media, videos and other technology to share stories
- Encourage employees to volunteer on company time
- Create a community to share what they are doing with other entrepreneurs and learn from each other
- Build relationships through events
- Partner with indigenous communities, indigenous accelerators and indigenous companies
- Monitor and evaluate unintended consequences and report on the effect and impact of programs
- Use B-Corp as a storyteller
- Build capacity in volunteers
- Raise funds for non-profits in different ways including sponsorship, fees for service, selling products and government funding

However, part of the discussion focused on issues and points of caution including:

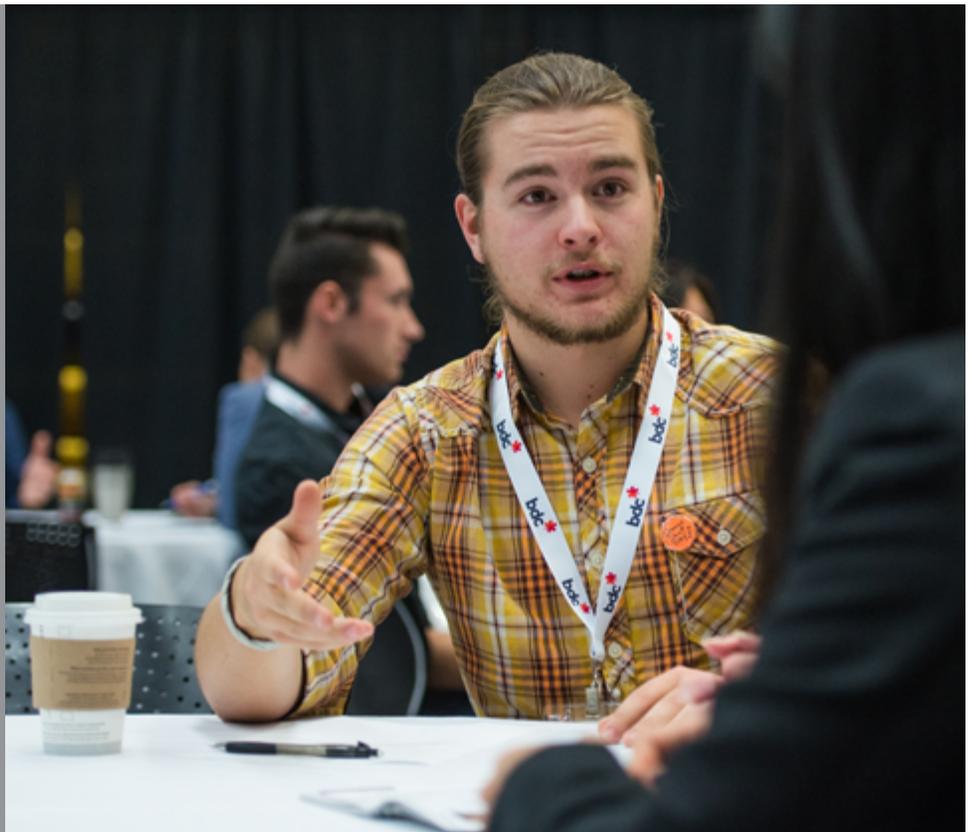
- Quick fixes typically create more problems
- Smaller organizations are not noticed by larger corporations and do not receive funding as a result
- Not all employees value CSR or are not sure what the value of CSR is
- Sometimes it is difficult to gain interest and support for CSR from companies
- Many companies are still not making CSR mean something - it is just words or a pool of funds to them so that their stakeholders believe they are good citizens
- Not all groups have the tools to share stories around micro-enterprise - in particular those aged 30-50 years
- There are differences in how children vs. adults react to issues (meaning the way to tell the story will differ)

Snapshots:

In Ontario - We asked Forum partner, BDC, to highlight a B Corp client that is making a difference in their industry. They introduced us to Beau's All Natural Brewing who is changing the brewing industry in Ontario. They are leading the way in their ethical sourcing, organic certifications and environmental stewardship.

In Alberta - Servus Credit Union took business with purpose to a whole new level as they reshaped their mission over the last year. Servus is now doing business with a "noble purpose" - shaping member financial fitness.

Learn more on the Soul Forum blog!



"The basic trend moving forward is integration. Before, it was philanthropy on the side or it was CSR in the PR or marketing department. CSR has become far more holistic."

- Wayne Visser

"There is a pressing need for the big transformative ideas that can dramatically move the dial and, at the same time, the more nimble ones that enable everyday change in the right direction."

- Linda Coady

"There is an importance of aligning personal values with corporate values and for many people it is the key in deciding where people go to work."

- Jim Dewald



Soul of the Next Economy Forum

The Soul of the Next Economy Forum is where business, the non-profit sector, government and educational institutions converge to change the way we do business and impact society.

Fuelled through innovation, collaboration and corporate social responsibility, we come together to:

- **Learn** about local and global social and development challenges
- **Connect** with peers, industry experts and other sectors addressing these challenges
- **Engage** in suitable business-oriented solutions to these challenges

Join us on September 28 and 29, 2018 for lively panel discussions, informative sessions, networking opportunities and thought-provoking keynote speakers.

Early Bird Pricing of \$99 +GST is available until August 31, 2018.

Contact registration@nexteconomyforum.com for more information.

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