

Case Study: A Company Demonstrating Sustainable Growth Decades After Decades Empowered By Strong Guiding Principles

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Abstract: This study is done to understand the key points for an organization to have a sustainable success over decades. The anonymity of the organization is maintained. The study is conducted by taking interviews of the Human Resource Managers of the organization and as per the details given by them the case study was written. Strong culture of commitment to the belief in long-term success, and forgoing short term vision could only be achieved with well establish principles to which each and every person is supposed to abide with and accountable for their own actions. CBR have strong laid principles on ethics and values to which each member of the organization should abide to follow and thus form the culture of the organization. These rules serves as guidelines for employees when they are in dilemmas and hence they feel empowered to take decision by their own. Culturally CBR promote to showcase trust within all its stakeholders. Hence, with all the above closely knitted guiding principles, organization although so diversified and aged, but still able to perform effectively and efficiently year after year, and has been a dream organization to work with for many aspirants in many parts of the globe.

Keywords: Sustainability, Human Resource, Governance, Integrity, Trust

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I. About the Company

CBR works in food and agriculture industry with headquarters in USA. CBR is multinational company that is committed to feed the world in a responsible way, reduce environmental impact and improve the communities where all live and work. They mainly work with farmers, governments and communities. In Fiscal year 2015 CBR had multi-billion in sales and other revenues. Across all their four major markets segments CBR thousands of customers turn to company for innovative solutions. Namely:

- **Agriculture:** CBR buy, process and distribute grain, oilseeds and other commodities to makers of food and animal nutrition products. CBR also provide crop and livestock producers with products and services.
- **Food:** CBR provide manufactures of food and beverage products, foodservice companies and retailers with high-quality ingredients to prepare the end product.
- **Financial:** CBR provide risk management and financial solutions to its customers who deal in agricultural, food, financial and energy around the world.
- **Industrial:** CBR develop and market sustainable products made from agricultural feedstocks. They also serves industrial users of energy, salt, starch and steel products.

Following are the kinds of products and services, they provide to customers across those four business segments:

- Animal nutrition and feed
- Commodity trading and processing
- Industrial/ bio-industrial products
- Energy and fuels
- Farmer services
- Financial and risk management
- Food and beverage ingredients
- Health and personal care
- Salt

II. CBR Success Story

CBR has existed for a century now, and decade over decade it has grown to become as big as to be part of top Fortune companies of the world, and leader in field they operate. To help ensure CBR continued success, they have been focused on four performance measures. Their performance measures recognize that high

performance of any company begins with engaged employees, more the employee are engaged, more they contribute towards the growth of the company. Secondly, organization focus their efforts on satisfying customers, and ensuring they work on the principle that customer comes first, even if that means they have to forgo short term gains, there have been incidents where in company has to bear losses in interest of customers, but it resulted in long term relationship with customers which are also multibillion dollar companies, and thus become part of integral growth. Thirdly, CBR acknowledge that their commitment to liveable, sustainable communities is utmost importance, and way to be sustainable in the market is by giving back to the communities. And lastly, they reflect that organizations exhibiting these behaviours will always enjoy the profitable growth necessary to sustain performance over time. CBR has a history of rising to challenges. Across the company, they are focusing on areas they believe are the most important for strengthening, profitability and restoring growth: Operate with excellence, take a common approach, where sensible, invest to serve customers, be the trusted partner, and Tap employees' full potential. Fuelled with strong performance measures and focus which company exhibits to follow, CBR has been able to achieve various awards in the space of employee management.

- Best Diversity Employer Award- CBR was recognized for the second year in a row for having exceptional initiatives to attract and retain employees from diverse communities. It has been recognized Financial Group as an employer that displays exceptional workplace diversity and inclusiveness.
- Great Place to Work- CBR ranked number five among 50 leading companies with 95% of employees reporting that CBR is a great place to work in region it operate in. Company recognized as a top employer offering the best benefits for younger employees
- CBR named by Aon Hewitt's as Top Companies for Leaders. Because of the rapidly changing environment, they recognize the importance of developing agile, decisive and engaging leaders who build strong teams and create inclusive environments where all employees can succeed.

Apart from above mentioned leadership, work culture and employee engagement awards, CBR has been able to bag many other renowned awards in space of business leadership, sustainability, community services, investment, innovation in the field they operate

III. Attributes Towards Sustainable Growth of The Company Over Many Decades

Since CBR founded it has acted on the belief that doing the right thing sets the foundation for long-term success. This rich legacy has sustained them for decades. Today, as a global leader in nourishing people, they remain just as committed to this belief. Their customers, shareholders, employees and communities count on them to uphold this commitment and they know that CBR's continued success depends on it.

Leaders & HR executive believed that from Human Resource stand point, companies Code of Conduct attributes strongly towards sustainable growth. With time Leaders change, policies get evolved so does the business and its challenges year after year, one geography to another, but one things which sits common across geographies and over time is it Code of conduct. CBR's code of conduct outlines their company's ethical and compliance standards for conducting business throughout the world and serves as a guide for employees when they face dilemmas where the right choice is not clear, this way employee feel empowered to take right decision for good to the company. Their Code is grounded in their seven guiding principles, which are ingrained in their culture and serve as the foundation for the behaviours expected from all of their employees in all parts of the world.

As employees of CBR, they are accountable for following Code and exercising good judgment consistent with it. They are also responsible for reporting Code violations that they learn about or experience. Employees who fail to comply with their Code—including those who fail to report Code violations—may face disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Managers set the tone for their teams, and they are often the first place employees turn with questions. As a result, they are expected to Set a strong example of ethical conduct, Provide training, education and resources to support employees in complying with the Code and underlying policies, encourage employees to speak up if they have questions or concerns and watch for and appropriately address misconduct in their teams.

Employees could report any misconduct to their managers, HR, controller, law department, or ethics and compliance team which is dedicated to ensure the right level of governance. For ease of reporting, company has dedicated online website to report an event or even call an ethical cell via internationally accessed helpline number for clarification or reporting.

IV. Guiding Principles of CBR

As stated, CBR's principle lay key foundation stone to set a culture in the company which is spread across multiple geographies, and form one era to another. Hence, this study went to understand in detail on the guiding principles as listed below:

- **Integrity**

They take pride in conducting business with integrity. They compete vigorously, but do so fairly and ethically. They do not offer or accept bribes or inappropriate gifts and they comply with the laws and regulations that support fair competition and integrity in the marketplace. CBR does not offer or accept bribes, kickbacks or other corrupt payments, regardless of local practice or perceived customs. Bribery is illegal in most places where they do business, and it can cripple CBR's long-standing reputation of conducting business with integrity.

The anti-corruption rules that apply to their dealings with government officials are especially strict. Under the FCPA, it is a crime to offer or give anything of value, either directly or indirectly, to a government official in order to improperly influence the official. The FCPA, along with many other similar laws, can apply to all of CBR, their employees and third parties acting on their behalf around the world. If you interact with government officials, you must understand and strictly follow all anti-corruption laws, is what CBR believe in. Competition laws, known as "antitrust", help foster and preserve fair and honest competition in the market place.

Conducting business in compliance with these laws has contributed to CBR's growth and prosperity throughout the years. While these laws are complex and can vary from country to country, they generally prohibit competitors from working together to limit competition. They also prohibit improper attempts to monopolize markets or control prices. All employees are expected to follow competition laws, as well as CBR's own competition policies. Employees must also be careful when interacting with competitors—for instance, in connection with trade associations and benchmarking. Another way of preserving fair and honest competition involves the proper collection and use of competitive intelligence. Gathering competitive information and business data is an appropriate business practice, but it must be done legally and ethically. It is never acceptable to engage in fraud, misrepresentation, trespassing or other illegal or unethical methods to obtain competitive intelligence.

CBR respect the intellectual property rights of individuals and companies outside of CBR and do not attempt to obtain their confidential information, or otherwise use their intellectual property, inappropriately. Intellectual property includes trademarks, copyrights, patents and trade secrets. In some contexts, trade secrets are also known as confidential information or know-how.

- **Abide by the law**

CBR conducts business globally and their employees are citizens of many countries. As a result, their business activities are subject to the laws of many different jurisdictions. Some laws extend beyond a specific country's borders. For instance, certain U.S. laws concerning imports and exports, bribery and trade sanctions apply not only to their U.S. operations, but to their operations around the globe. Obeying the law is the foundation on which their reputation and Guiding Principles are built. As a global organization privileged to do business all over the world, they have the responsibility to comply with all of the laws that apply to their businesses.

- **Accuracy of Financial Books**

All business records they create, in whatever form, must reflect the true nature of transactions and events. Accurate and honest records are critical to making sound business decisions and maintaining the integrity of their financial reporting. Their business information, in whatever form, must reflect the true nature of their transactions. Never deliberately falsify a record or try to disguise what really happened and avoid exaggeration, colourful language and legal conclusions in your communications. When compiling and sharing financial information, they comply with U.S. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for CBR's consolidated financial statements and local accounting rules for CBR's non-U.S. financial reporting requirements. They prepare and file their tax returns and other filings in accordance with all tax laws. Any employee who supplies information for financial or tax purposes must provide it in a timely manner and certify both the accuracy of the information and their compliance with CBR policies.

- **Respect & dignity to all**

Organization respect rights of human and do global efforts to protect them, working with organizations and governments to address this issue that they can't solve single headedly. They achieve their goals through their people. They provide a safe workplace and value the unique contributions of their global team, enabling those who support CBR's goals to achieve their own individual potential.

Organization strongly support not to have child labour and illegal, forced labour in their operations, anywhere in the world. They follow employment laws and regulations strictly, like rules for employing minors, support equal rights and no discrimination in employment. Organization believes to pay regularly, competitive salaries and benefits. Organization strongly believe to invest for the employees who desire to work with their full potential. CBR gives complete freedom of association and collective bargaining.

CBR believes to conduct all business activities in alignment with the protection of health and safety of their employees. They also equally care for their contractors and visitors. Organization abide by all health and safety laws with their own strict health and safety requirements. Organization works round the clock to continuously improve its performance; and insist urgent work, is also carried out with safety. Organization believes in safety of their employees and visitors to their facilities. Managers are supposed to train their employees to work safely on their jobs. Each and every employee re provided with training and programs to do their jobs safely. All employees are taught to responsible for their own health and safety, their fellow employees, and visitors to their facilities and they are also supposed to report incidents or unsafe practices that they witness to their manager.

Organization believes in strengthening though diversity. Organization embraces the variety of life experiences of their employees with varied backgrounds that they bring to work. Organization supports diversity based on genders, physical abilities, races, religions, sexual orientations, local customs, languages, life experiences and socioeconomic statuses. Employees vary in their personal styles of thought process, expression and problem-solving abilities. Organization strongly support diversity and wants to be successful as a global organization. Employees has to demonstrate respect for those who are different from them which includes recognizing diverse viewpoints of employees and their could be better way of thinking than their own way. Diversity could be strength for an organization. In fact, their differences make them stronger and better able to serve the needs of their global organization. Organization believes to provide equal opportunities to all employees irrespective of without race, ethnicity, cast, creed, colour, gender, age, disability or other characteristics protected by law. Discrimination and retaliation have no place in the CBR organization. These rules are for all employees. They work together and treat each other equally. They work in a non- violent environment, which is also free from any unlawful harassment. Each of them is responsible for their conduct.

- **Mutual Trust with Partners**

Organization honours its business obligations by just not meeting their contractual responsibilities. Employees are trained to create a mutual trust between their business relationships with customers, suppliers, vendors, consultants, other business partners. Employees are supposed to work with each other with mutual trust. CBR's history is rich in trust in its Business relationships. Such empowerment comes with the honesty in communicate about their products and services, contracts, sales materials, emails etc. They are supposed to make only those commitments which they can stand behind. They are trained to be very thoughtful about their promises. In case, employees are not able to stand up to their commitment, employees are suppose to transfer their commitments to their managers so that they can find out a solution for the situation and take the next step. They make sure they properly amend or terminate existing contracts if needed. Employees respect and protect the confidentiality & ownership, rights of intellectual property entrusted to them. Organization also believes to protect customers' and business partners' intellectual property rights as meticulously as they protect their own. Organization take s special care of data which is concerning with their customers and business partners. They make sure it is protected and used lawfully. Organization also follows the competition laws. These laws encourage free and open competition and ensures customer to get opportunity to have fair purchase of products and services.

- **Responsible global citizen**

The wide range of the operations of organization touches every aspect of society. Thus, CBR is seen as an organization that identifies as a part of an emerging world community which actively have actions contributing in building the community's values and practices. They maintain strict environmental safety and standards of food safety are also strictly adhered. They also believe to share their global knowledge and experience to cope up with economic and social challenges.

- **Safeguard owns Property**

Each of the employee is responsible for safeguarding company property and resources made available to them in the course of their jobs. Their property and resources include both their physical assets, such as facilities, materials and equipment, as well as communication systems, such as computers, Internet service, telephones and email. Organization's valuable assets also includes confidential business reports, technical

information and other intellectual property like patents, copyrights and trademarks. Organization believes that every employee will count on each other and will act as stewards of the organization. To conserve the value of the organization, information is protected and situations are avoided where there is a conflict of interest in personal and business interest. Organization is very strict on to the confidentiality of information, they never disclose their information in outside world unless they have explicit orders and approvals for it. Information is shared when it is covered by a non-disclosure agreement, if appropriate. Internally as well information sharing is not encouraged unless the person has a business need to know about it. Organization strictly prohibits employees from trading on “material non-public information” about companies with publicly traded securities (including debt securities) and communicating “material non-public information” to others in violation of the law.

V. Results

This study concludes that by performing the right set of things lays the foundation for success in long-term. The strong legacy of consistent and predictable behaviour has enabled CBR to sustain for decades, and become the global leader in the area they operate. Strong culture of commitment to the belief in long-term success, and forgoing short term vision could only be achieved with well establish principles to which each and every person is supposed to abide with and accountable for their own actions. Be it internal employee or external customers or supplier.

For CBR to enable sustainable growth in a complex organization which works in diversified domain, and across continents , organization need to have strong laid principles on ethics and values to which each member of the organization should abide to follow and thus form the culture of the organization. These principles helps outline the organization’s ethics and compliance with the standards for conducting business throughout the world. These rules serves as guidelines for employees when they are in dilemmas and hence they feel empowered to take decision by their own. These principles get deep-rooted in the culture of the organization and serve as the foundation for the behaviours expected from all of the employees in all parts of the world, irrespective of the department or geographies they belong to. CBR believes in high performance of any company begins with engaged employees, hence promote high employee engagement. With right culture it is 95% voted CBR to be great company to work with, which clearly demonstrate the satisfaction employee seeks to be integral part of CBR. CBR believe in developing agile, decisive and engaging leaders who build strong teams and create inclusive environments where all employees can succeed shows commitment towards development of leader within. Culturally CBR promote to showcase trust within all its stakeholders. Organization insist to be thoughtful for the promises and commitments that employees make as they are not supposed to commit something that they can’t deliver.

Organization lays strong emphasis on obeying the laws, which is supposed to be the foundation on which CBR has built up its reputation since many decades. They follow employment laws and regulations strictly which also includes rules about the employment of minors. Organization also supports equal rights, elimination of discrimination, and encourage participation in job. Organization believes to have transparency in the all business records. Hence, with all the above closely knitted guiding principles, organization although so diversified and aged, but still able to perform effectively and efficiently year after year, and has been a dream organization to work with for many aspirants in many parts of the globe.

VI. Conclusion

Strong culture of commitment to the belief in long-term success, and forgoing short term vision could only be achieved with well establish principles to which each and every person is supposed to abide with and accountable for their own actions. CBR have strong laid principles on ethics and values to which each member of the organization should abide to follow and thus form the culture of the organization. These rules serves as guidelines for employees when they are in dilemmas and hence they feel empowered to take decision by their own. Culturally CBR promote to showcase trust within all its stakeholders. Hence, with all the above closely knitted guiding principles, organization although so diversified and aged, but still able to perform effectively and efficiently year after year, and has been a dream organization to work with for many aspirants in many parts of the globe.

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