

## Sonya Wooldridge Sengson Challenges Companies to Rethink Philanthropy

Written by Australian Business

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ATLANTA, GA, September 13, 2013 /24-7PressRelease/ -- [Sonya Wooldridge Sengson](#), owner of Servant Health Group, encourages all of her employees to engage in philanthropy to build stronger relations with the communities they serve. She is not alone. Many companies strive to stay involved. According to a recent [article](#) on Article 3, the way that companies are engaging with charitable organizations needs to change.

Involvement with charities is becoming more complex. Rather than the companies just donating money or giving grants, employees are looking for ways to get more personally involved. Stakeholders want to know how the organizations are giving back and benefitting the community and society. Consumers show their approval or disapproval by how much money they invest in products and services. More employees are seeking jobs with companies that making a positive impact and give them a chance to get involved.

Addressing this need for change, a McKinsey article explains, "In a majority of cases, CSR has failed to fulfill its core purpose - to build stronger relationships with the external world." So what can companies do to adjust their corporate social responsibility (CSR)? One strategy that has emerged is the donation of expertise in addition to, or in place of, monetary contributions. Employees are finding ways to utilize their skills in unique ways to benefit charities. For example, Toyota engineers donated their talents to The Food Bank for New York City, one of the largest anti-hunger charities in the United States.

What they were able to share was their experience in efficiency. They were able to reduce dinner wait time from 18 minutes to just six minutes by identifying gaps in operations and making improvements. They also managed to decrease the time needed to pack supply boxes from six minutes to only three seconds. Though it seemed strange at first to pair up engineers with a food bank their talents proved highly beneficial. Similarly the professionals at UPS are able to benefit the American Red Cross by donating their skills in transportation and logistics during times of natural disaster and emergencies. The company developed Logistics Action Teams that aid in delivering emergency supplies.

Providing employees with meaningful ways to get involved and give back cannot only boost their morale, but also lead to more innovative thinking. IBM uses corporate philanthropy to help their business grow and enter new markets. It is important for companies to strike a balance between how much time employees spend on philanthropic endeavors and how much time they devote to their core work, however. Although these programs are often run by company executives or a CSR team, the article points out that the trick to making them succeed is getting everyone involved and creating shared value. Companies can simultaneously meet the needs of stakeholders and communities while still meeting their own needs.

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"Having a solid presence in the community is important for any business," says Sonya Wooldridge Sengson. "When employees are more involved and provide valuable contributions, everyone benefits. Employees donating their talent not only helps charities to become more successful, but it makes them feel as though they are making a meaningful difference." Sonya Wooldridge Sengson ensures that each branch of her company stays actively involved in the communities they serve.

### ABOUT:

[Sonya Wooldridge Sengson](#) is the owner and president of Servant Health Group, a pharmaceutical distribution company for the long-term care industry. While based in Atlanta, GA, there are branch offices in Manassas and Daleville, VA, and Raleigh, NC. Sengson is a registered pharmacist who has spent the majority of her career in long-term care but has also worked in several other areas. Aside from professional involvement in philanthropy, she is also personally involved through supporting the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.