



Canadian Business for Social Responsibility

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

It's Fact - Collaboration Can Address Complex Social and Environmental Issues

Business leaders in collaboration share success stories and best practices for improving performance and driving innovation

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On October 21st, business leaders from across Canada and around the globe convened in Toronto for the 8th Annual Canadian Business for Social Responsibility Summit. This year's Summit highlighted how Canadian businesses can address their corporate social responsibility challenges through collaboration with internal and external partners.

"Collaboration done right is becoming a new and important source of competitive advantage," said Adine Mees, President & CEO in her opening address to the Summit. "What's becoming very clear is that collaboration is essential if we are going to solve the pressing environmental and social issues we are facing today."

Keynote speaker Dr. Karl-Henrik Robèrt, Founder of The Natural Step highlighted how collaboration can bring profound and positive change to corporate social responsibility practices. "We need to integrate sustainability as an essential condition of business strategy. But companies cannot move forward too fast alone. Because return on investment lags, we could lose good leaders if we don't address sustainability through collaboration," said Dr. Robèrt.

Business leaders attending the Summit participated in a brief survey. When asked if their respective organizations were collaborating with external organizations, 38% said that their organization was participating a great deal in collaboration; 44% said their organizations were somewhat participating in collaboration; 13% said their organizations were participating very little; and, 4% said that their organization was not at all involved in collaboration.

Summit speakers emphasized that effective collaboration is key to finding creative solutions to managing multiple stakeholders, global issues and local impacts. "If you don't take a collaborative approach, you may get a solution but it will not survive pressure," said Bob Elton, Executive Chair, Powertech Labs Inc.

When discussing how social innovators are breaking boundaries, shaking up traditional business models and achieving results, David Labistour, CEO, Mountain Equipment Co-op, stated, “we try to reach out to work with like-minded people including competitors.”

Key discussion points and findings highlighted by other conference speakers included:

- Partnerships work when all parties have a "win" and are transparent and equal;
- Both collaboration and sustainability approaches must be embedded into organizational culture to be transformational.

About the CCSR Annual Summit on CSR

Now in its eight year, the CCSR Annual Summit is Canada's premier conference on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Annually it brings together Canada's top executives and experts from leading companies to highlight initiatives on how to integrate CSR into corporate strategy, while covering current trends, policies and programs that can influence future business innovation. To learn more visit: www.ccsr.ca/summit

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About Canadian Business for Social Responsibility

Founded in 1995, Canadian Business for Social Responsibility (CBSR) is a non-profit, member-led organization that mobilized Canadian companies to make powerful decisions that improve performance and contribute to a better world.

The globally recognized source for corporate social responsibility in Canada, CBSR is the Canadian representative in a world-wide network committed to corporate social responsibility.

For more information please visit www.ccsr.ca.

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