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What are your thoughts, in general, on charitable giving?

I personally believe that everyone should incorporate charitable giving into their lives in some way. I am a great believer too, that this doesn't mean just giving money- sometimes giving of your time or your expertise is what people need more than money. Having had personal experience of not being given expertise or guidance in the past and knowing how difficult it was for me to get where I wanted to be, I do what I can to ensure that other less fortunate people have access to opportunity, expertise and education in technical marketing areas more readily than I did.

Is your giving personal or corporate or a combination of both?

It's a combination of both. As a company we use charitable events as team building exercises. Most recently the team zip lined across the Lagan to raise money for NICFC, which was actually one of my milder challenges! I give up a lot of my personal time and expertise to organisations/ causes that I am passionate about.

How do you give to charity: monetarily, your own time as a volunteer or your specialist skills?

In the past I have undertaken personal challenges including 10Ks and white collar boxing - literally fighting for charity which was by far one of the most challenging yet rewarding experiences. On the softer side I also give my time and expertise to sit on the Board of Now, a charity that assists adults with learning difficulties into employment and also one of their social enterprises, Gauge.

What types of causes do you favour and why?

I'm very passionate about facilitating access to education and in helping those seeking career opportunities- particularly in my area of expertise, ecommerce and digital marketing. This stems back almost 15 years to a past manager in a previous career who attempted to curb my drive and who prevented access to opportunities for me. This is my way of doing what I can to ensure that doesn't happen to anyone else! I also give regularly to cancer charities, as a result of the personal impact that this has had on my own family.

Are there specific charities or causes that you give to regularly? How do you choose which to support?

I support 1 in 3 Cancer Support Group- a local charity dear to my heart as it was originally created by my aunt and has since been driven forward by the powerhouse that is my mother. Cruelly both have been diagnosed and since have beaten breast cancer- my own mother just this year whilst all the while driving forward the Support Group. I choose causes that I am passionate about or effected by

Do you believe that companies and individuals have a duty to help others? If yes, why?

I believe in karma and reflecting this: giving helps ensure that you receive. There are many ways in which companies and people can give - you can give of your time, your expertise or your

money. It doesn't have to be all three but giving of just one can make such a huge difference to an individual. It saddens me when people become so self-centred that they stop seeing the opportunities that exist for them to help others.

What is your message to business people who may be thinking about becoming more involved in strategic philanthropy?

My message would be to get involved in an area you are passionate about. I would also suggest that they get involved in ways that allow them to tangibly see or feel the difference that they can make to others. One of my most rewarding moments I am lucky enough to observe every year at the Now Graduation. Seeing their pride in themselves and what they are achieving gives an immense sense of satisfaction.

Giving Northern Ireland was set up last year to champion Philanthropy. Why do you think it is important that there is an organisation that helps businesses and individuals think more strategically about giving?

A lack of strategic vision around giving means that it often is short-term, sporadic and therefore fails to make any real lasting difference. A strategic approach to giving widens your view from just a short term giving action to an awareness of the impact you as an individual or a company can have on others and in your local community. From a business perspective the longer term social return on investment impact that this can make can ripple back into the business.