

8 Things Your Business Can Do to Get Ahead in the Gift Economy

A little while ago I read an incredibly inspiring book called *Sacred Economics*, by Charles Eisenstein (2011). Eisenstein takes the position of many sustainability activists and change makers today that the current economic system is entering a phase of collapse. What scholars tend to disagree about is what to do about it and what a new system will look like. Eisenstein's book is focused on how changes in the money system will propel us to a more sustainable and flourishing future. His core idea is the emergence of The Gift Economy, a capitalist system, but one that is defined by community, gift giving, real value, and local power. I highly recommend the book. For you now I've summed up 8 things your business can do to get ahead in the gift economy. These steps will not only score you points on the B Corp assessment, increase employee well-being, and strengthen ties to the community, they will also set you up to flourish in a new kind of economy.

1. Offer pro-bono service
2. Charge based on costs and add a line for "gratitude adjustment" that clients can decide on themselves.
3. Don't charge a fixed fee at all, let clients pay based on ability and gratitude. Provide information about costs and market rates.
4. Create spaces for community building at your workplace. Could you let community members use your space at night or on weekends for events?
5. Offer employees opportunities to get to know each other.
6. Pay a living wage!
7. Have a "needs and gifts board" at the office. Feature it in staff meetings.
8. Start/end staff meetings by acknowledging gifts that team members have received.