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Chapter 12: Lululemon: Turning Lemons into Lemonade: 12-5a Contributions to Communities

Book Title: Business Ethics: Ethical Decision Making and Cases Printed By: Kennisha Holloman (kholloman@grantham.edu) © 2019 Cengage Learning, Cengage Learning

## 12-5a Contributions to Communities

Lululemon takes its responsibilities to communities seriously. It recognizes that community involvement will not only help gain new customers but also promote its mission of creating a healthier lifestyle. For these reasons, Lululemon holds free weekly yoga classes taught by fitness professionals. Lululemon shoppers who have attended the free yoga classes can get a 15 percent discount on their purchases.

Additionally, while the practice of secretly observing customers might be controversial in some ways, it also demonstrates Lululemon's commitment toward meeting customer needs. Lululemon believes that customer relationships are not based on technology but rather on more basic marketing techniques like simply talking with the customer. The Lululemon culture encourages employees to establish strong connections with their customers, which is why the company emphasizes that its employees are "educators." By listening carefully to customer concerns as they shop, Lululemon gets an immediate picture of problems that the company can address. For instance, one time when the CEO was in a Lululemon store she overheard many complaints that a certain type of knit sweater had sleeves that were too tight. Based on this information, she canceled future orders. It is clear that Lululemon is willing to make quick product changes in response to customer feedback.

Lululemon also contributes to local charities throughout its communities. In many communities, Lululemon empowers customers by offering the clientele the opportunity to suggest organizations and charities to receive donations. Lululemon's program allows for up to eight local charities to receive donations. This shows its commitment to its local communities and willingness to give back as much as possible, while still maintaining a healthy bottom line. Lululemon's efforts display a stakeholder mindset as it makes decisions that benefit its shareholders, clients, local neighborhoods, and nearby businesses.

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