

## A crazy idea

September 2017. The title of Bertrand's email caught my eye. "What about a crazy idea after winning 'Great Place To Work'?". "After years of focusing on the well-being of its employees, what if Davidson decided to become the number one B Corp consulting firm in France? In other words, a company determined not to be "the best in the world" but "the best for the world". Maximising its societal impact and minimising its environmental footprint".

The idea appealed to me and I was confident because we had been increasing the number of initiatives at our subsidiaries over the years along these lines. I therefore recommended starting to work on processing the B Impact Assessment questionnaire from B Lab, the auditing organisation that validates (or not) companies applying for the label. I logged on to the online evaluation and there... I felt less confident.

### There are two main reasons for this:

1. First of all, there are 200 very focused questions to be answered in a VERY well-supported way (no evidence? no points...)
2. Along the way, I discovered that our feeling of being an "exemplary and virtuous company" didn't fare well when confronted with the questions

asked. Just one example: we thought we were doing more each year in terms of sponsorship of associations (Restos du Coeur, Action contre la faim, etc.). But the reality of the figures gathered for the audit caught up with me and amazed me: Certainly in absolute terms (number of initiatives, partners, euros paid out) we have been growing every year. But as a percentage of our revenues, our commitment has been declining!

The day and then the evening wore on (my eyelids were closing) and I felt more and more convinced. B Corp is not a "reward" to be obtained: it is potentially a major vehicle for transforming our model. This is not an end in itself, it is the beginning of a new page in the history of the Dav collective. The various topics covered by the audit (gender equality, diversity, governance, environment, responsible purchasing, etc.) are all avenues to be explored. Each of them inspired me with ideas for actions for Davidson which are extensions of my own convictions and personal initiatives.

One day, then two, then three hundred and sixty-five, before the questionnaire was completed and analysed by the B Lab, additional audits were conducted, transformation projects were initiated and then completed, and the verdict was



reached a few days before the annual party and sports tournament that brings all our employees together: We got our certification. We were the leading techno consulting company and the largest French company B Corp (we may no longer be, by the time you are reading these pages, because the movement is growing and that's great!). The announcement also coincided with the results of an in-house "pro/perso" competition (a competition that showcases the employee with the best pro idea to improve Davidson's operations by enabling him/her to pursue a personal project that is close to his/her heart). The reward is ... the idea of setting up a multi-regional environment committee. A wonderful coincidence that a few months later led to:

- The widespread collection and sorting of waste by a company specifically tailored for all our locations.
- Eliminating all plastic cups and non-reusable items.
- Improving our purchasing strategy to redirect it towards shorter supply chains.
- Choosing truly green energy suppliers.
- Increasing our donations to more than the 1 per 1000 of the group's revenue.
- Our partnership with Planète Urgence which enables any employee to go on an international solidarity mission who wishes to do so, upon request.
- A partnership with Article 1. Around thirty employees sponsor students from underprivileged backgrounds for 3 to 5 years as they embark on a higher education program.
- For us, being B Corp is the beginning of a journey, not the destination. In fact, at COP25, we made a commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030. The next few years will therefore be devoted to implementing solutions to reduce

our environmental impact and improve our societal impact.

For us, being B Corp is the beginning of a journey, not the destination. In fact, at COP25, we made a commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030. The next few years will therefore be devoted to implementing solutions to reduce our environmental impact and improve our societal impact.

How about we meet again in 10 years?

**Véronique**

## *Feeling inspired?*

### **Everyone**

Take a look at the Butterfly Act describing our environmental principles. The annual CODIR is now open to all group employees. Feel free to register to attend at the end of the year.

### **Admin**

Goodies and supplies ordered must be eco-responsible! Don't forget to read the sustainable purchasing charter (included in the Butterfly Act).

