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## UNIT 9: Social responsibility

We're now going to turn to a topic that follows naturally from our discussion of marketing and that ties in closely with the issue of meaning. Social responsibility means taking the greater good into the picture when starting a business or developing a new product or service to launch on the market. Instead of focusing only on what is good for you or good for the business, you focus also on what would benefit the environment, your employees and society as a whole.

An obvious example is developing products that require minimal packaging to reduce waste and environmental impact. If minimizing packaging also reduces your costs, there is a „win-win“ for you and the environment. But it's a bit more complicated than that. Customers are increasingly demanding that the companies they buy from be socially responsible. So even if minimizing packaging actually raises your costs, the positive reaction by customers to someone who is concerned about the environmental impact of packaging, might lead to more sales.

Thus, I propose that in addition to the idea, the meaning, the customer, and the plan, you should also take social responsibility into account.

Your idea might actually have social responsibility at it's core, but even if it doesn't the meaning you offer could be in part based on social responsibility.

Your customers might be more willing to do business with you if they perceive you as socially responsible. This might involve acting responsibly towards customers, for example, by avoiding known allergens in your production.

Social responsibility could play a role in your plan. That's obvious if your value proposition includes an element of social responsibility. But even if it doesn't, social responsibility could guide your choice of channels and suppliers, and communicating about your social responsibility might form part of your relationship with customers.

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