

HOW TO BECOME B CORP CERTIFIED

WHAT IS B CORP CERTIFICATION AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR BUSINESSES?

The “B” stands for beneficial. It indicates that the business voluntarily meets certain standards of transparency, accountability, sustainability and performance. That the business aim to create value for society, not just for traditional stakeholders such as the shareholder

This free assessment looks at all areas of a business including how it interacts with its workers, customers, community and the environment. If a business scored at least 80 points on this assessment and is legally committed to these values it can apply for B Corp Certification.

WHAT DOES ‘LEGALLY COMMITTED’ MEAN?

Being legally committed means that businesses have to update their official legal company documents to show that they value people and the planet.

In an old business model, businesses are legally required to act in the interests of the shareholders. This usually means making as much money as possible for the people that own the business.

This new business model means businesses are legally required to act in the interest of the stakeholders. A stakeholder is a member of a group without whose support the organisation would cease to exist – like the planet and the people in it, not just the shareholders.

As such, what B Labs do is ask businesses to commit to this new business model by changing their legal structure. How they do that differs depending on where in the world the business is.

In the UK when you start a business you have to register it with Companies House. To change the legal structure you need to submit a new article of association with Companies House. This is to show that your business is committed to act in the interest of its stakeholders as well as its shareholders.

Once a business has done this, as well as complete the free assessment and got at least 80 points, they are then able to sign the B Corp Declaration of Interdependence, pay their certification fees and become B Corp Certified.

Following that they can use the B Corp logo and need to provide a yearly impact report. They also need to update their assessment every three years to maintain certification.

WHY DO BUSINESSES GET B CORP CERTIFIED?

B Corps set the gold standard for good businesses. When becoming a B Corp, your business joins a community of thousands of others all over the world with the same values and beliefs. It's a great way for you to build relationships with new clients or suppliers and other business leaders in your industry.

It also helps business owners look at what areas they can improve their impact, whether that's providing better employee benefits, using more sustainable materials or even trying to attract the right investors to help grow their business.

Becoming B Corp certified will help engage, attract and retain great talent in your business.

More and more people make a decision on where to work based on how well they will be treated at work and what positive impact their work will create. In fact, in a recent Deloitte survey, 77% of Gen Z say that it's important to work at an organisation whose values align with their own.

THE FACTS BEHIND BECOMING B CORP CERTIFIED

A [survey was recently undertaken by the Innovation group](#), in which they surveyed over 10,000 people across the UK, US, China and Australia to discover what consumers are interested in when purchasing products or services. The results of which further highlighted the importance of sustainable business practices.

92% of people are trying to be more sustainable and 90% of people feel that businesses and brands have a responsibility to take care of the planet and its people.

However, 85% believe there is not enough information on businesses to know how sustainable they are, even though 83% of them would choose a business with a better record of sustainability. As such, the B Corp Certification is a really easy way for people to be able to see what businesses are leading the way.

Alongside this, 70% of people stated that they would pay more for products or services if they protect the environment.

Convenience is key here. If something isn't convenient it's very difficult to get people to do it. Businesses need to make it easy for people to know quickly if they are a business that cares about sustainability.

B Corp Certification makes it super easy for your business to stand out. Having the B Corp logo on your product, website, sales material or business card instantly communicates your business values. It empowers people to vote with their money. It makes it easy for people to know that buying from you is a credible way to support a business for good.

B IMPACT ASSESSMENT

It's completely free to fill out a B Impact Assessment to see what your business score is before you decide whether or not you want to go ahead and apply. And in the UK it is completely free to update your articles of association with Companies House and change your legal structure. If you are successful, it is only then that you pay the certification fees and become B Corp Certified.

Most businesses employ a B Corp Consultant or B Leader to help them with this process. This is to guide them through the process completely and allow them to get the most out of the certification.

It can also take a lot of time to do this and businesses need someone to not only do the work but understand the best way to do it. They also need a Consultant to help them complete the assessment, create and implement company policies, documents, training, processes and systems that will help improve the business impact, sustainability and assessment score.

USEFUL LINKS

- B Corporation: <https://bcorporation.net/>
- B Corp UK: <https://bcorporation.uk/>
- Become B Corp Certified with betternotstop: <https://betternotstop.com/become-b-corp-certified/>

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