

APPROACHES TO SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

LEAST
RESPONSIBLE

OBSTRUCTIONIST

LEVEL 1

A firm doing as little as possible to address social or environmental problems.



Nestlé has been accused of violating international agreements signed in 1981 to control the marketing of infant formulas that serve as substitutes for breast milk. Those agreements stress the importance of breast-feeding. Nestlé allegedly provided mothers in West Africa with free samples of milk powder and violated labeling standards on infant formula in the countries of Togo and Burkina Faso.



Tobacco companies take this position in their marketing efforts. In the United States, they are legally required to include warnings to smokers on their products and to limit their advertising to prescribed media. Domestically they follow these rules to the letter of the law but use more aggressive marketing methods in countries that have no such rules.

DEFENSIVE

LEVEL 2

A firm does everything legally required of it but nothing more.



vodafone

Many organizations will respond to requests for donations to Little League baseball, youth football programs, and so forth. Vodafone's local affiliate, for example, sponsors a youth cricket league in Pretoria, South Africa. The point, though, is that someone generally must knock on the door and ask—the organizations do not proactively seek such avenues for contributing.

ACCOMODATIVE

LEVEL 3

A firm meets its ethical and legal requirements but will go further in selected cases.



Apple has adopted a proactive policy of trying to minimize the impact of its products on the environment. As part of this effort, Apple prominently posts a detailed annual environmental progress report on its corporate website.

PROACTIVE

LEVEL 4

A firm exhibits the highest degree of social responsibility.

MOST
RESPONSIBLE