TEACHING GUIDE

Module 7: The impact of Covid-19 on Human Rights in Supply Chains, An Example from Target

Introduction
This module on how a global pandemic will impact how businesses think about human rights issues in their supply chain is a valuable resource for faculty and lecturers interested in enhancing their syllabi with this information. This module is useful for those at the Haas Business School, the Labor Center, and the Information School.

Learning objective
Understand how Covid-19 will shape our understanding of human rights issues in global supply chains

Speaker video
(16.15 minutes video clip)

Speaker Bio: Beth Cieslik, Senior Director Responsible Sourcing and Sustainability at Target

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Readings


Possible assignments
• *(Discussion forum prompts - 10 minutes)*:
  o Reflection on Beth Cieslik's video

• *(Class discussion - 20 minutes)*: How might consumer behavior change as a result of the global pandemic?

Key teaching points
• Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there is a connection to the supply chain that consumers did not have before. There is a realization that there is a person at
the other end of those products. The post World War II generation is not really accustomed to not being able to get the things that they want.

• **First trend as a result of Covid is this re-humanizing of manufacturing.** Certainly things are made in factories and there are machines, but there are people who are managing those machines, who are sewing on those sewing machines.

• **This connection and this real humanization could mean a change in behavior and consumers can actually start to change their behavior and be willing to pay more for their garments or their home goods**

• **We often see in the consumer research that people say that they want to value human rights and they think that things should cost more that they will pay more for a premium item that has been produced in conditions that they view to be superior, but we haven't actually ever seen that play out.**

• **Hope to see a real conversation about fair wages and a more of an acknowledgement about what things should really cost.**

• **Second issue is going to be a focus on migrant workers because workers have been restricted from travel and work due to Covid-19.**

• **We will see less cross border migration and just generally a decrease in economic migration because people have been unable to get back to their families and they've been away from their home for much longer than they anticipated. There will be a change in where people look for jobs.**

• **Also a change in so called “white collar” jobs: people are saying ‘I don't want to spend my life commuting. I don't want to spend my life living in a city where my family doesn't live in...’**

• **The third trend will be a shift in business models are going to shift because the way we engage in a supply chain is going to have to be different, and so one of the big things we’re going to see is more domestic manufacturing in the US**

• **We will see a trend toward automation**

• **Engagement with suppliers as brands and retailers will change. There will need to be fewer transactional and seasonal relationships and we’ll have to think differently about how we, you know procure. Those trend items and products so we’ll have to engage in deeper longer term relationships with key suppliers more collaboration**