

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/blog/videos/recruiting-more-orgs>

Larry Brilliant, Executive Director for Google.org, confesses that the company stole the idea for a profit-driven non-profit from Salesforce.com. Brilliant reminds us that only privately-held companies can give their money to charity, but that Google is optimistic about recruiting other large enterprises to work in the public interest.



Transcript

So the question is, "Does Google.org train other companies?" First of all, I want to say that we stole the idea of Google.org from another company, from Salesforce.com and Mark Benioff.. So Mark, if you're listening, thank you.. It was his idea to have the 1% equity and the 1% profit and the staff time.. We're looking with a great deal of interest to see what other companies will be able to do a dot-org.. In fairness, you can't quite do it once you're public.. You now are the custodian of other people's money.. Your shareholders own the company.. It's their money.. You can't give away their money.. Benjamin Franklin wrote a long essay about the fiduciary duty of the owner of a chartered company, and one of those duties that he's not allowed to do is to give money to charity..

So it's much easier if you do it before you go public, but once companies are public, they can do things with the concurrence of their shareholders.. It's a lot harder, but I think I'm seeing a change in the PG&Es and the Wal-Marts and the Duke Energys; companies that I wouldn't have, 20 years ago, been talking about in a way that these are companies that are trying increasingly in different areas to do things that make me proud...