

## CSR+ Ideals

### Strategies, Scope, Learning, Development & Training for Organisations

Many organisations recognise that they have a huge impact on the working lives and life styles of people with whom they interact. Organisations, whether in the private, the public or not for profit sector recognise and commit to investing in and effectively 'putting back' more into the wider community and society than they have drawn.

### CSR Ideals

The ideal behind these CSR strategies is partnering with those diverse individuals, groupings, communities and organisations with whom the organisation transacts most frequently. This transaction can sometimes be related to the organisation's core business – but equally could occupy more of a social or community role or responsibility.

The purpose behind this approach by organisations is that these 'partner' or 'constituent' relationships will mature and develop into a positive 'can do' attitude between the organisation and those whose lives are touched, affected and influenced by the enterprise. And in turn, the constituent groupings will impact the performance of the business organisation.

This dual transactional nature of the relationship has benefits for all parties and we can see that what can start as a low level commitment to CSR, can mature into mutually beneficial relationships with all parties prospering.

I believe the greatest scope for improvement is focused on the impact of the organisation on the immediate geographic and the wider environment.

### Scope of CSR is wide ranging from Community to Environment

For instance, many successful household names have a strong CSR background and thrust out and push their influence for the betterment of forming strong positive relationships with set groupings. There are many examples and these include IBM, M&S, Virgin, Body Shop, BT, Standard Life, Anderson Strathearn, BP, British Gas etc.

We can never explore the deep equation of mixed motives that permeate all behaviour – whether individual or corporate – but I am aware that any CSR activity that moves towards an enduring partnership on better use of resources for the benefit of the 'greatest number' is moving us positively in the right direction.

### CSR – Different Agendas

Just to confuse the situation, the CSR agenda and their priorities for each of these organisations companies can be very different. They are not right and not wrong - they are just different.

Many focus more on community issues – that is issues that impact the place of employment, the local geography, health, sport, transport, facilities, education, learning and changes in the behaviour and development of core groups in the community. We find that relatively

few focus on environmental factors more focus on immediate community resources issues in comparison to the wider environmental challenge.

We believe that a 'mix' of both 'community and environmental' issues is probably a great support in helping the communities and the organisations take care of environmental factors on a local scale, before tackling things globally. If we can shape things locally at first – just imagine the ripple effect when more and more organisations commit to an integrated agenda?

### **Benefits of Corporate Social Responsibility**

The benefits of committing to some form of CSR usually far outweigh the costs. The important issues for the organisation that does this is that they are able to develop 'trust' with their core constituents – those they impact. The ambition is that, with careful guidance, this will mature into 'mutual trust' which is characteristic of true partnerships.

Developing 'win-win' relationships and working together with other groupings – whether they are community leaders or staff or consumer or an environmental group has to be in the best interests of the business organisation.

Having a positive and sincere public relations reputation is worth far more for the organisation than short-term cheap and insincere PR image building exercises. Companies are aware that Investor Relations and relations with customers, consumers, regulatory and statutory bodies is founded on substance and not spin.

Committing to serious CSR+ activities can have multiple payoffs for the organisation – whether it's a private business, public sector, NHS Trust, Local Authority or Quango, third sector organisation, charity or social entrepreneurship.

### **Progress & Maturity in CSR+ the variety and depth of activities**

Some organisations have gone so far as to develop CSR charters, policies and strategies demonstrating to their customers, staff and key stakeholders that they commit to be a positive force in shaping the community and society for the better.

CSR policies and activities differ markedly between organisations. Some commit to funding community activities – ranging from local events to funding projects, allocating and seconding staff to project manage and guide new community initiatives.

Others commit financially to helping develop economic ventures such as actively structuring and supporting Social Entrepreneurship in all its forms.

Others demonstrate their commitment to youth through the development of sports facilities and activities – while others focus on those in the community of more mature years. Some focus on getting people back to work – while others on core social skills for disadvantaged groups.

### **Real responsibility requires enabling others to change their circumstances**

What is important is that those companies and organisations believe that they influence events far beyond the services and products they provide to their user or customer base.

Some organisations have developed a sophisticated structure, with staff focused entirely on CSR and environmental issues – while others are committed to the ideal but have less ability to devote staff and resources beyond a certain level of activity.

What is important is having positive impact on the environment and the larger community – not just their staff and their immediate customers or consumers.

### **Our Role & Mission in CSR**

As specialist providers in change management services to largely blue chip and large scale public sector organisations, we believe we are best placed to use our tools of learning and change management within the context of promoting effective tangible results for all constituencies involved in a CSR activity.

### **Processes that Deliver Results**

We know and deliver the processes that will generate more ROI for all parties in any CSR activity. We have branded ourselves CSR+ with the core focus on enabling organisations to design, deliver and implement results that fit in with both community and environmental goals in mind.

In terms of CSR our environmental agenda supports the work of the Prince's and the Carbon Trust. We build on their fine work. Much of their work is specialist in delivering worked solutions to reduce the carbon footprint of individuals, corporates and public sector organisations. They offer specialist service – we enable you to develop a unique strategy upon which you can invite these other bodies to tailor for 'a hands' on approach.

We help you put your strategy in place in a cost effective manner. We offer specialist advice to promote your organisation to have most impact in results for CSR both internally to your staff, your suppliers and externally to your customers, the community and key stakeholders and quasi regulatory and government agencies and bodies.

Our role includes building awareness of CSR from both the community and the environment. We will not tell you how many recycling bins and which light bulbs to use, and the best source of energy for your business (though we will recommend others who have that expertise).

### **Strategy to Implementation**

Our role is very simple, and that is to operate from strategy to implementation. It means creating CSR as an organisational or corporate idea and ideal to working models and staged events, awareness, learning and development workshops where the purpose is promoting action.

We also provide you with a powerful set of diagnostics to measure awareness of your CSR activities and its relative penetration within your organisation, your supply chain, your customer base and the community.

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