

Conference Summarising Leonardo Da Vinci Transfer of Innovation SYMBIOSIS Project

**CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
STRATEGIES AND TOOLS FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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CSR Strategies and Tools for Stakeholder Engagement – Conclusions and Recommendations

- CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ; The Concept
- THE CONTEXT; The Growing Importance of CSR
- STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
- SYMBIOSIS; MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS
- TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

“ A concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis” (European Commission Green Paper)

“ CSR involves a commitment to;

- Minimising negative environmental and social impacts and maximising positive impacts*
- Open and transparent practices that are based on ethical values and respect for employees, communities and the environment*
- Delivery of sustainable value to society at large as well as shareholders*
- Building in CSR as a core element of business purpose and strategy”*

(Cranfield Business School UK)

CSR vs CORPORATE IRRESPONSIBILITY

“ The crisis resulted, in part at least, from a failure of some businesses to understand their broader ethical responsibilities. We need a new culture of ethics and responsibility.

This is essential – not just to restore the brand image of particular enterprises but to restore people’s faith in the market economy itself.

People want markets – but they want markets with a conscience”

Jose Manuel Barroso, President European Commission

11 June 2009

THE CONTEXT

THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF CSR

- Development of Global Economy in which Knowledge drives Competitiveness and change is more rapid.
- Globalisation can increase prosperity but can also increase inequalities and damage the environment
- Knowledge era is value driven. Employees and customers want a better, fairer and more sustainable world.
- Retaining talent and developing the workforce are critical to competitiveness.
- Growing awareness of ethical dimension and consequences of corporate irresponsibility.

THE POLICY CONTEXT

- EU – ‘EUROPE 2020’ Strategy for Smart Sustainable Growth and CSR Strategy
- Role of new standards and tools in promoting CSR including AA 1000

POTENTIAL ORGANISATIONAL BENEFITS OF CSR

- **HUMAN RESOURCES BENEFITS CSR** can enhance recruitment and retention of staff and improve staff perception of the company / organisation
- **INCREASED COMPETITIVENESS and ENHANCED BRAND IMAGE CSR** can increase organization's responsiveness to its market and build customer loyalty based on distinctive ethical values
- **REPUTATION and RISK MANAGEMENT** Company / Organisational reputations can be ruined by major environmental accidents / health scares. Building a culture of 'Doing the Right Thing' can offset these risks.
- **REDUCED OPERATING COSTS / INCREASED EFFICIENCY** Improved environmental management e.g. reduced waste production, water usage and increased energy efficiency can directly reduce costs and create other benefits

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Organisations have traditionally tended to have a narrow stakeholder focus, e.g. companies on the needs of shareholders.
- CSR should be HOLISTIC, and address the organisations impact on all its stakeholders and its environment including;
 - Shareholders / Owners
 - Employees
 - Customers
 - Suppliers
 - Wider Community
 - Physical Environment

SYMBIOSIS GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The Transfer of Innovative Solutions to contribute to the Integration of CSR good practices and management of stakeholders involving different sectors.

SYMBIOSIS STAKEHOLDERS

- SMEs
- NGOs / 3rd SECTOR
- PUBLIC SECTOR
- UNIVERSITIES

SYMBIOSIS

- Builds on previous work on CSR – of EU EQUAL “Responsibility for Change” Partnership.
- Includes 7 partners and 2 associate partners from Portugal, Spain, Italy and Poland.
- Partners aimed to incorporate and test stakeholder engagement in their own organisations using AA 1000 and in stakeholder sectors.

SYMBIOSIS

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

COMPANIES

- Integrate stakeholder management methodology in the sustainability strategy of the company.
- Invest in enhanced training of managers on sustainability issues.
- Involve employees in processes and secure commitment to corporate values.
- Develop stakeholder engagement tools customised and adapted to needs of specific firms.

SYMBIOSIS

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

NGOs / 3RD SECTOR

- Develop Sustainability Strategies with focus on engagement of stakeholders.
- Reinforce importance of partnerships between sector and the Business World
- Improve training for people working in sector to support incorporation of sustainability into daily practice.

PUBLIC SECTOR

- Strengthen Stakeholder Engagement within public bodies.
- Increase their role in development of strategies in other sectors.

UNIVERSITIES

- Integrate principles of Sustainable Development across curricula.
- Develop new programmes on SD and Stakeholder engagement.

SYMBIOSIS PRODUCTS / RESULTS

- CASE STUDIES
- MANUAL AND HANDBOOK
- NEW TEACHING MODULES.

Also the Project has increased use of the AA 1000 Standard and examined differences in its qualification in different countries and stakeholder groups.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

- Critical role of CSR in rebuilding confidence and trust vital for the health of Europe's social market economy
- CSR can point the way to new forms of VALUE CREATION based on addressing societal challenges
- European Commission commitment to “*renew EU Strategy to promote CSR as a key element in ensuring long term employee and consumer trust*” (March 2010)
- CSR and Stakeholder Engagement are not ‘Optional Extras’. They are core issues for survival in the context of a changing environment.