

Introduction to Corporate Social Responsibility

People

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In today's economic and social environment, issues related to social responsibility and sustainability are gaining more importance, especially in the business sector. Business goals are inseparable from the societies and environments within which they operate. Whilst short-term economic gain can be pursued, the failure to account for longer-term social and environmental impacts makes those business practices unsustainable.

A recent study on Sustainability and Innovation by the MIT Sloan Management Review and the Boston Consulting Group has revealed that sustainability has a permanent place on 70% of management agendas. The majority of the 3,000 respondents to the study also mentioned that sustainability activities are adding to profits, with companies making changes to their organisational structure and business models in order to support more sustainable business practices.

At the international level, the United Nations launched in 2000 the Global Compact to align business operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption. With almost 8,000 corporate participants in over 140 countries, the UN Global Compact is the world's largest voluntary corporate sustainability initiative.

This course aims to introduce participants to the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR is presented as a management concept and a process that integrates social and environmental concerns in business operations, and a company's interactions with the full range of its stakeholders.



The overall objective of the course is to enable professionals from private companies, NGOs, International Organizations and Governments who wish to be involved in CSR, to define Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and apply such concept in their institutions and day-to-day projects.



The course consists of 4 modules as follow:

Module 1: An introduction to CSR

Module 2: CSR Definitions

Module 3: The United Nations on CSR

Module 4: International Principles and Standards on CSR



The course is composed of four modules that will be covered in three weeks, corresponding to 20 learning hours. Each module includes lessons that provide the core content. There are also reflection and collaborative exercises that invite participants to watch videos, reflect on their social and economic environment and discuss in partially facilitated discussion groups. Participants also engage in case study analysis, gaining a better and more practical understanding of CSR.

Participants are required to complete assessment activities, including quizzes to test their understanding and a practical activity where they use the acquired knowledge to analyze a specific CSR strategy.



The course aims to address the needs of professionals in private companies, NGOs, international organizations and governments who would like to be involved in CSR and apply and embed the concept of CSR in their institution.



Technical Requirements:

Hardware: 64 MB of RAM, 1 GB of free disk space

MODEM: 56 K;

Platform: Windows 95 or later versions, Mac OS 9 or OSx;

A good internet connection is necessary

Browser: IE, Mozilla Firefox, etc.

Software: Adobe Acrobat Reader.

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