

Corporate Social Responsibility

(Net Impact 2007 Handbook)

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a catch-all phrase to describe any of the activities that a corporation engages in to drive social, environmental, and ethical impact. A definition of CSR that is widely accepted in the field is “the efforts companies make above and beyond regulation to balance the needs of stakeholders with the need to make a profit.”

A widely quoted current definition by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development states that "*Corporate Social Responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large.*"

People consistently rank CSR as their top area of interest when it comes to social impact ideas. There is no set standard for how CSR positions are incorporated into a company. Positions that deal with community, environment and operations often fall within specific divisions of a company (community affairs; health, safety and environment; and more) or within product groups. Some CSR positions are based in the legal or compliance departments. While it is difficult to capture all the iterations of CSR, this section sheds light on the CSR function with suggested positions and industries to explore.

Private Sector: Corporations

Large natural resource extraction companies such as Shell, BP and Exxon Mobil were the earliest to address CSR issues and hire CSR professionals due to the nature of their products and the places they sourced them. Footwear and apparel companies began to focus on CSR in the 1980's as human rights lobbyists brought pressure on the firms to address the problem of sweatshops in their supply chains. As CSR continues to gain currency, firms across different industries are beginning to launch CSR initiatives.

CSR initiatives vary greatly from company to company. CSR can sit in a number of corporate departments including the CEO's office, the manufacturing division, quality control, legal, public relations and community affairs. Some companies centralize CSR planning and implementation, while others centralize the CSR vision and decentralize the implementation. Each situation is unique, and it is important to understand where CSR fits within a given organization so that you may better understand the drivers of change within the corporation.

In some cases firms have CSR departments ranging from one or two dedicated professionals to a committee of employees with other full-time responsibilities in the firm. If a company is primarily concerned with compliance, it is common that the CSR professional is the chief legal counsel or another professional with a law degree. For environmental-related positions, the compliance department will typically hire professionals with a scientific background.

Example corporate CSR roles include:

- Managing the compliance monitors who are out in the field auditing factories for labor compliance
- Managing and tracking corporate sustainability goals and metrics for the business
- Developing systems for making triple bottom line decisions for products and overall business

Working with teams to evaluate decisions based on financial and sustainability goals

- Managing cross functional task force team to assist them in developing their key performance indicators and meeting the overall corporate sustainability goals
- Communicating with various stakeholder groups about the corporation's position on various issues
- Coordinating the publication of the company's corporate social responsibility report.
- Consulting with a company to set up one of the above activities

Private Sector: Consulting Firms

As interest in CSR has grown among corporations, large consulting firms have begun to offer their own CSR-related services. Typical areas of focus include: CSR strategy, corporate accountability, environment, sustainable development, or supply chain management. Targeted industries include: consumer goods, energy, extractives, food and agriculture, financial services, pharmaceuticals, technology or transportation.

Example organizations include:

- Framework CR: <http://www.frameworkcr.com/>
- Environmental Resources Management: www.erm.com
- Interpraxis: <http://www.interpraxis.com/>

Public Sector

CSR career options can be found mainly in national government agencies, or international organizations. The British government has even gone as far as instituting a Minister for Corporate Social Responsibility.

Example organizations:

- UN's International Labor Organization - <http://www.ilo.org/>
- UNDP - <http://www.undp.org/>

- USAID - <http://www.usaid.gov/>
- World Bank (Partners for Development) - <http://www.worldbank.org/>

Nonprofit Sector Roles

In the nonprofit sector there are a multitude of organizations which monitor and report on corporate practice, serve as think-tanks, develop best practices and advise companies on CSR issues.

Example organizations:

- Business for Social Responsibility – www.bsr.org
- Net Impact – www.netimpact.org
- World Resources Institute -- www.wri.org

Career Path and Entry Salaries

There is no typical career path in CSR. A career in this field could start in a big business, working in the compliance department of a firm such as Levi Strauss, and continue in the public sector, designing government policy, and go onto a niche consulting company providing CSR client services. Entry salaries vary as much as career paths and could vary from the lower end working for a CSR nonprofit to a better remunerated position in the legal department of a corporation. Between these extremes are corporate positions and those with international institutions such as the World Bank. Anecdotally, many CSR positions are filled by internal candidates.

Sample Career Positions

Private Sector

Manager, Monitoring Operations for a Large Corporation

The Manager, Monitoring Operations reports to the Senior Manager, Monitoring Operations and is responsible for managing the strategy and day-to-day activities of executing the corporation's direct factory monitoring plan; managing relationships and deliverables with internal and external auditors; identifying opportunities for improvements and efficiencies in factory monitoring; and conducting analyses on how monitoring resources can be best deployed. The Manager, Monitoring Operations role requires demonstrated experience in labor standards monitoring, strong negotiation and communication skills, and demonstrated research and analytical skills.

Responsibilities:

- **Monitoring Firms:** Manage relationships and service with third-party monitoring firms, including negotiation of contracts, identification of firm strengths, monitoring of performance, and feedback to firm and ILS management on firm performance. Includes leadership of industry Monitor Standards project to establish standards for individual social compliance auditors
- **Research and Analysis:** Conduct research, analyze data and communicate benefits and risks regarding application of monitoring resources and options for maximizing audit coverage. Create and execute risk assessment process. Includes analyses of licensees' or other corporate compliance programs, industry initiatives and other issues
- **Auditor Tools:** Maintain and enhance auditor training tools, including revising and updating existing training tools, conducting research to incorporate best practices, and delivering training as needed

Skills Required:

- Thorough and deep knowledge of social compliance monitoring standards, techniques, tools and protocols, including interviewing workers and management, reviewing factory/employee records and visually inspecting factory operations
- Firm understanding of issues relating to human rights, international labor standards, social compliance, codes of conduct and corporate social responsibility, including best practices of other brands, industry initiatives or non-governmental organizations
- Familiarity with external standards/systems, e.g., FLA, SA8000, ETI, ICTI, WRAP
- Experience in manufacturing environments
- Strong negotiation skills
- Strong oral and written communication skills, including experience developing and delivering presentations to internal and external audiences
- Strong quantitative, analytical skills
- Good problem-solving skills
- Self-motivated, sense of urgency and initiative
- Prefers fast-paced environment, displays polish under pressure, flexible
- Proven thought leader and innovator
- Ability to manage and prioritize multiple responsibilities while achieving high level results
- Team-player and relationship-builder
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office programs – Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, Visio, Access
- Comprehensive research and analysis skills
- Working knowledge of a second language (Spanish or Chinese) preferred

Nonprofit Sector

Mining Manager, Energy and Extractives Team

The Manager will report to the Director of the Energy & Extractives Team. This person will play a significant role in helping the Energy & Extractives Team to develop business opportunities and deliver advisory services projects that provide high value to leading mining companies that are interested in improving their corporate social responsibility (CSR) or sustainability performance. The Manager will also lead and participate in project teams.

Responsibilities:

- **Business Advisory Services:** The Manager will play an integral role in delivering consulting services to companies in the extractives sector, with a particular focus on mining. Areas of focus include: CSR performance assessment and reporting; strategy development; social risk identification and management; stakeholder engagement; sustainable development; corporate accountability; environmental sustainability; human rights and supply chain management
- **Business Development and Recruitment:** The Manager will help identify and recruit new partner companies and will have significant responsibility for developing new business opportunities
- **Grants and Contracts:** This nonprofit carries out significant work in researching and developing new tools and methodologies that advance the field of CSR. The Manager will play a role in designing and executing grant-related work for the Energy & Extractives Team
- **Internal and External Representation:** The Manager will represent the Energy & Extractives Team as required at cross-functional internal meetings regarding budget planning, strategy development, member service and satisfaction, marketing communications, and the annual conference. This person may also be required to represent the organization externally at conferences and other industry events
- **Other Duties:** The Manager may be required to perform member service-related activities or duties as assigned by the Director, Energy & Extractives Team

Skills Required:

- Experience working with, or in, the mining sector
- Knowledge of, and experience working on, one or more CSR-related issue areas such as: stakeholder engagement, supply chain, environment, human rights and sustainable development
- Minimum 3 - 5 years experience in for-profit or nonprofit consulting with large corporate clients and/or 3 - 5 years corporate experience in the extractives industry
- Advanced degree in business, law, public policy or other relevant discipline preferred
- Understanding of the dynamics and interaction of the public, private and non-profit sectors
- Knowledge and experience related to business processes such as strategic planning, organizational development, stakeholder engagement, training programs, performance management, change management, etc.
- Well-developed leadership and people skills, including a demonstrated ability to enhance the skills and effectiveness of other team members
- Entrepreneurial work style
- Strong verbal, written and facilitation skills
- Fluency in spoken and written Spanish
- Willingness to undertake significant business travel
- High ethical standards

Corporate Sustainability Manager

As a member of the Corporate Sustainability Team, the **Corporate Sustainability Manager** will be responsible for managing the Corporate Social Responsibility efforts of the Company and reporting into the Director of Sustainability. You will be working with cross functional teams to meet corporate sustainability goals and developing and tracking key performance indicators, and will be managing the cross departmental task force to ensure key stakeholders are included in decision making and achieving the programs goals.

Responsibilities:

- Managing and tracking corporate sustainability goals and metrics for the business.
- Developing systems for making triple bottom line decisions for products and overall business. Working with teams to evaluate decisions based on financial and sustainability goals.

- Managing cross functional task force team to assist them in developing their key performance indicators and meeting the overall corporate sustainability goals. Tracking the task force progress and measuring each department's success.
- Compiling all metric data to show yearly results of goals.
- Preparing yearly summary of goals and achievements and assisting in development of a CSR report when appropriate.
- Promoting industry leading best practices in sustainability for product design, development, manufacturing, sourcing, and distribution. Advising teams on how to find environmental benefits and managing social issues.
- Managing all budgets and savings of sustainability and recommending utilization of funds.
- Assisting in managing and developing sustainability communications internally and externally with key stakeholders. Maintaining industry research and understanding of sustainability trends, thought leaders, and conferences.
- Creating continual educational opportunities on trends and innovations in sustainability field for company employees.
- Managing philanthropic and NGO partners to integrate them into the business and developing pro-active programs.

Skills required:

Looking for an individual with BA or BS degree in environmental/sustainability field, or business and a minimum of 5 years working experience. You must be able to travel, ability to work in a team and fast paced environment, exceptionally strong written and oral communication skills required. Proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, Database and PowerPoint and must be able to work professionally with flexibility in handling multiple priorities. This position requires a results-oriented individual who has exceptional organizational skills, strong attention to detail, excellent communication and grammatical skills, planning, and scheduling skills.

Career Resources

- **Net Impact Career Center:** The Net Impact Career Center is a comprehensive resource for graduate business students and professionals committed to using business skills for social good. The Career Center features MBA-level positions focused on corporate social and environmental responsibility, nonprofit management, and philanthropy. <http://www.netimpact.org/career>
- **CSR Europe:** CSR Europe is a nonprofit organization that promotes corporate social responsibility. The website provides CSR job listings in Europe at private and nonprofit firms. <http://www.csreurope.org/>

• **Business for Social Responsibility:** BSR is part of a growing global network of national organizations that promote awareness of CSR and provide business leaders with opportunities to collaborate and network with innovative managers across all industries, geographies and functions. Their job posting board features jobs from BSR member companies.

<http://www.bsr.org/jobs/csr/index.cfm>

• **Ethical Corporation:** a listing of corporate responsibility related jobs in companies, NGOs and consultancies, from all around the world.

<http://www.ethicalcorp.com/>

• **Boston College's Center for Corporate Citizenship:** features job postings related to corporate social and environmental responsibility at companies and nonprofits. <http://www.bccccc.net/>

• **JustMeans:** a career site focused on corporate and environmentally jobs, at all levels (not specifically targeted towards MBAs). <http://www.justmeans.com>

Co-Op America: <http://www.coopamerica.org/cabn/resources/greenjobs.cfm>

Global Equity: <http://www.global-equality.org/>

Socially Responsible Organizations:

<http://web.centre.edu/econed/Subpages/socially.htm>

Social Investment Forum: <http://www.socialinvest.org/>

CSR Wire: <http://www.csrwire.com>

Net Impact: <http://www.net-impact.org/index.htm>