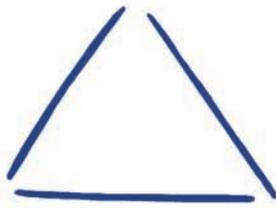


Doughty Centre



Corporate Responsibility

Cranfield
UNIVERSITY
School of Management

Corporate Responsibility Champions Network: A 'How to' Guide

#1 in the Doughty Centre 'How to do Corporate Responsibility' Series



Doughty Centre, Cranfield School of Management
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Accenture: Isabel Naidoo. Accenture is a global management consultancy, technology services, and outsourcing company. In 2005 Accenture established a team to drive an impact-based program of activities in the community and environment. This team is well networked in the business, with representation on the Board and one senior level champion in each business unit. This means CR principles are cascaded into each part of company and institutionalised into the way Accenture does business. The CR team are committed to communicating metrics and progress in a transparent way to all staff from day one – CR is part of the induction process and there is a regularly updated website which showcases what is done at a corporate level and practical ways that everyone can get involved.

Accenture's central strategy is underpinned by a group of champions who ensure that there is a regionally relevant focus which has led to a high level of local buy-in. The central team supports all champions with bespoke tools and maintains regular contact. The local champion's contribution is measured as part of the performance management cycle - although taking the role is not compulsory. The increasing ambition of Accenture as a whole, and the local champions, means that sharing best practice, building relationships and measuring impact of what is done is of paramount importance.

Alliance Boots: Richard Ellis. Alliance Boots is an international pharmacy-led health and beauty group with significant retail presence. Richard began as a consultant for AB who wanted to implement CR 5 years ago when they developed their CR strategy. Due to then very little inter-organisation routes he developed a network structure and process, deciding not on a large CR department but instead integrate actions into the ranks via a network. He did a situational analysis, gap analysis, highlighting what could be duplicated.

CR is always on the Board/CEO agenda, who were engaged from the start. They created a CR Committee, assigning a Board level leader to each strand, who was given a champion (nominated or volunteered) to implement. Richard invites key external stakeholders into the process for mutual learning. Each country provides a strategy, signed off by the Board. The culture of AB supports activities for social and environmental benefit. For less popular issues the business case is clearly shown. CR is now part of staff induction program as well as part of the culture. Richard finds that using the principles of CR enables new solutions to be found to business problems, engaging staff to the process.

Lloyds TSB: John Swannick. Lloyds TSB is a large financial services business operating across personal, business, private, corporate, and international markets. John's role in stakeholder relationship management developed into a focus on corporate responsibility in 1997. Initially he encountered scepticism around business relevance from colleagues in the organisation. Top level championing, development of a coherent business case and increasing awareness of what corporate responsibility is, were critical. Use of a familiar business tool – the EFQM Excellence Model – to measure current performance and identify gaps, scoring them to demonstrate areas for improvement in a wide range of business-as-usual activities, brought greater understanding and commitment. The top level committee of senior executives identified a group of senior business unit managers to enable this improvement activity. Over a period of 5 years the 'enablers network' has grown to around 60 people connecting to localised formal and informal groups of 'champions' operating in business units or company-wide working groups tackling specific key issues.

PricewaterhouseCoopers: Clare Gardner. PwC provides industry focused assurance, tax and advisory services. It is part of the organisational culture to be engaged in the community.

PwC decided to use a network approach to embedding CA to enable responsibility and activity to be devolved throughout the firm. The Board was engaged and initiated a cascade effect to nominate a leader in each office or business unit, who identified others to join. A central team coordinates. Local champions develop an annual budget and plan, which the central team approves and according to which the national budget, agreed by the Board, is distributed. Central develop 3 year plans for the Board to approve. The champions were usually already involved in volunteering. Their responsibilities are to organise local activities, in accordance with the firm's focus areas and policies. They are managed by a member of the central team, who also gathers and shares best practice.

Reed Elsevier: Mark Gough. Reed Elsevier is a global publisher and professional information provider with over 30,000 employees worldwide. Mark began as an unofficial champion in a business unit in 2001, creating local teams through a bottom up approach, before being recognised and offered the role of Environmental Coordinator for the group. Champions were seen as a way to engage with passionate employees as well as a good risk-management approach, and from the outset the culture of the organisation was essential to employee involvement. Top management support is important.

Following Participants:

A network structure was instigated from the top, and centrally filled in. The CR team identified gaps and engaged already passionate MDs in those missing business units and regions to nominate champions and cascade down. A champion's role is voluntary. The network grew fast in core areas of operation and key geographic markets, developing goals and assigned roles, but it was more difficult to establish and enable champions in some areas such as Asia and South America. Central provide significant communication and support, running regular meetings by teleconference and in person, engagement programmes, events, and motivational initiatives throughout the year. Central set annual global themes under their core focus areas but encourage champions to interpret these individually based upon local motivations. Local teams have in the past been supported by their own departments, but this is now becoming more centralised as Reed Elsevier's business model changes.

(RFS Holdings BV) ABN-AMRO: Anna Towler & Lara Toensmann. A Netherlands-based international bank, ABN AMRO has been acquired by a consortium of Fortis, RBS and Santander, and the integration of its various businesses with their new owners is underway. As of 31 December 2007, ABN AMRO was a leading international bank with total assets of EUR 1,120.1 bln, more than 4,000 branches in 53 countries and a staff of more than 99,000 full-time equivalents worldwide.

In 1997 the establishment of ABN AMRO's values and business principles formed the building blocks for six areas of CR focus to be linked to functional area agendas. A central team developed a business case and strategy, established policies and subsequently mainstreamed tactical plans across functional areas, with a contact person in each region, initially identified from above. They researched perceptions in regions to feed into the global plan. A network was formed across the business units, with champions, and committees formed in each functional area to meet quarterly, agree projects, implement, and report back. Concurrent to formal top down agreements, bottom-up initiatives were fostered. They have Board backing and interest from staff, enabling engagement. ABN-AMRO see differences across regions of definition, importance, and implication of CR. They manage the network with a global vision, but local champions are given space to customise for local relevance. They take a two-pronged approach: coordinated change and emergent change. The champions are key to CR implementation, and they approach the evolution of the network with experimentation, bravery and the implicit understanding that initiatives should be relevant to the business.

Serco: Gail Johnson. Serco is an international company delivering first-class services to the public and private sectors by managing people, processes, technology and assets more effectively. It is a diverse, de-centralised and values-driven organisation and in her role as Head of Social Responsibility, Gail is an advocate of people networks to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and best practice.

When Serco decided to formally co-ordinate its CR activities in 2001, the company established a network of champions across the business, who reported into their respective divisional champions, who in turn were members of the company's CR Steering Group initially chaired by the Executive Chairman. Managed through the Serco Corporate Assurance Team, of which Gail is a member, this cross-company steering group develops the company's CR strategy which is then implemented and interpreted at a local level. At the same time it was recognised that there was a need to create cross-company regional networking groups to further facilitate the sharing of knowledge and to leverage the best use of resources to benefit the local communities in which Serco operates and serves. Each network has an agreed Terms of Reference and is supported centrally through the Assurance Team.

TNT: Mike Patrick. TNT is a global transportation and distribution company operating across 66 countries, headquartered in Amsterdam, and ranked in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. TNT has a small central CR team with strong support and backing from the Board, and has an organisational culture that views CR as part of everyday business. The CEO, business unit and country managing directors approach is to use a strategic cascade system that has been running for approximately 5 years.

The central team works with the full-time champions across a network of 80 from each country and business unit paid by the business units. In some countries there are CSR teams with a CSR manager or director so in total there is around 150 dedicated CSR people who have technical specialists on a particular theme (i.e. HSE, Social etc). They help to develop and implement the global CSR strategy and are accountable for local delivery, feeding back data, maintaining standards, continuous improvement, target creation, achievement, and running CR initiatives locally. Central provides data collation and reporting tools, training, annual meetings and expert support. The business units and countries are accountable for delivery – accountability is structured into the pay and reward systems for champions and business unit senior managers.

contributions from:

Corporate Citizenship, Corporate Culture, Corporate Responsibility Group

Foreword

At the Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility we seek to work with companies to understand the challenges they face in embedding a commitment to Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability.

Over the next few years, we are committed to producing accessible and rigorous action-research on corporate responsibility (CR). One aspect of this is the role that individuals at different levels of companies can play. The think-tank and consultancy, Sustainability, has recently identified the contribution of social 'intrapreneurs' inside businesses, who develop marketplace solutions which also have positive environmental and social impacts. We are currently looking at the way companies organise board oversight and governance of CR, including the role of non-executive directors given a leadership role for CR. This first "how-to" guide from the Doughty Centre looks at another way in which individuals can support CR – and that is through being a champion either for CR overall or for a particular aspect such as climate-change or community involvement. Running a formal champions network is starting to become more popular – as illustrated by the 570 "Plan A" champions in each Marks and Spencer store, who are championing M&S's ambitious five-year sustainability strategy.

As a new centre within an established school of management, we realise that CR has much to learn from existing disciplines like Strategy and Organisational Behaviour. How organisations achieve sustained change in other respects should have much to teach us about how to embed CR. Hence this guide and our future publications also seeks to make the link between CR and existing management theory, in a way which we hope blends established theory and latest practice, in a relevant and timely fashion.

Our thanks go to the businesses and their representatives who were interviewed for this guide; to friends and colleagues from other organisations who commented on the draft; and particularly to Centre associate and Cranfield MBA alumni Nadine Exter, who has researched and written it. We welcome comments and further examples.



David Grayson
Director of The Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility

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Executive Summary

This guide aims to show the what, why, and how of a CR champion and related networks. CR champions are emerging as a powerful tool available for embedding CR philosophy into an organisation, proving critical in the process of embedding CR. They play a strategic role, committed to causing change *and* to continuing the work in the long-term. A CR champion network takes time and effort to build but the use of champions, *as one within a number of tactics to embed CR*, has several clear advantages: by working directly with staff on initiatives champions can engage staff and become themselves more committed; champions connect divisions and regions, thus finding and propagating best CR practices and ideas; and they allow for a credible two-way interface between global and local in international companies.

Our analysis and subsequent advice is based on interviews carried out with leading corporations who are excellent examples of embedding CR through the use of champions and champion networks. The participants are larger organisations but we feel the principles are transferable to SMEs, albeit with adapted tactics. As SMEs receive ever increasing pressure to be a CR respondent in their customers value chain the guide may also help SMEs in how they can fit within customer's expectations and use an adapted CR network themselves.

We recognise that different organisations have different definitions of CR, and use different terminology. For the purposes of this guide we use the term 'CR' to cover work as diverse as responsible management, sustainability, a proxy for good management of staff, community, energy, waste, and customer or supply-chain management. The emphasis is not on what we say CR should include, rather how the organisations involve everything they feel should be included.

Section 1.1 below is a summary of 'How to' implement CR champion networks. The purpose of the rest of this guide is to provide the further detail that can aid your decision-making for if you should develop champions. It takes time to build a network, especially if you decide to start small and build up over time, and the rest of this guide can give the granular detail you can use at the relevant stages of your network. Depending on the maturity of your programme this guide will give you pointers if at the early stages, and advancement and development if at a more mature stage. There is no prescriptive, one-size-fits-all approach, but we hope by sharing emerging practice that you finish this guide with a much clearer understanding of if and how champions can work for you, as an integral part of embedding CR.

1.1 The 'How to' summarised

Best practice examples from our participants show a 'network' for these champions to sit within is an effective and cost-efficient management method. Our participants all took a top-down approach to developing their networks, so ensuring what the 'top' builds allows change to cascade down, creating connections and giving 'middle' and 'bottom' staffing levels a structure in which they can operate, innovate, and push back up to the top. They all emphasise the importance of the network fitting with the way the organisation operates and its culture, important particularly for ensuring organisational legitimacy (agreed relevance to the business) and acceptance.

The structure for the champions network that our participants built is pyramid shaped: a powerful CR champion at the top (1-2 people) to influence and inspire internal and external stakeholders; a forum of internal senior leaders, typically business unit leads, who are key igniters for growing the network; a (small) CR department made up of 'internal consultants'; a steering group of typically senior or middle managers with an operations focus; and the largest group of champions is the project teams, developed around (CR) themes, at the base.

Setting up the network usually started with a **situational analysis** of what their organisation did, its relevance, and how further benefit could be realised. Some of our participants did a **gap analysis** of current activities, identifying where activities or champions were missing. Recruiting champions can use a **cascade approach**, although our participants found this more challenging in countries only starting in CR. Some participants also took a bottom-up approach and ran open **staff fora**, from which individuals formed into teams and took projects back to their departments. These efforts slowly introduced the CR network to the organisation, developing contact points, relationships, and **advocates** across all levels.

For an organisation with cross-country reach, unique problems can emerge when cultural practices differ. Our participants stress the importance of an 'umbrella' approach (wide but encompassing principles that give direction rather than targets) to CR that allows flexible and relevant interpretation of a clear global strategy by regions and divisions. Companies are advised to anticipate that this could dilute overall impact, and work towards mitigating this. They need to be aware that global

baseline standards will be difficult to implement across countries (and departments) with very different cultural norms, business standards, and understanding of CR. Minimum levels may need to be set and work done to lift the standards across the whole organisation. This may require different approaches based on where the region, country or division is on its sustainability journey.

Critical success factors

- ❖ Don't be prescriptive – what works for one may not for another
- ❖ It has to be appropriate and genuine to your context
- ❖ It must be beneficial to the business as well as people and the environment
- ❖ Do be brave: experiment and give space and security for others to experiment as well
- ❖ Plan and prepare once you have defined your intentions
- ❖ But don't try to be perfect at the start
- ❖ Think in months and years, not quarters
- ❖ Clearly define themes linked to your values and business strategy
- ❖ If appropriate, have a global vision with local delivery
- ❖ Focus on values and value over targets and scores
- ❖ Listen to the voices! (Internal and external, from below and above)
- ❖ Build two-way vertical and horizontal information flows (top-down and bottom-up)
- ❖ Recognise the importance of building relationships
- ❖ Support your champions but make them take ownership
- ❖ Be open to unexpected good ideas that may emerge from unlikely places

Figure 1: Process flow**Commit to developing CR champions and a champion network (Sections 2-4)**

- ❖ Have a clearly defined CR philosophy/strategy
- ❖ Get commitment from board and senior staff
- ❖ Define the scope of the network (i.e. size, impact, expected outcomes/roles, CR function)
 - ❖ Get commitment from other key stakeholders
 - ❖ Manage expectation for ROI and anticipated outputs
 - ❖ Put in place appropriate resources

Plan the supporting network structure (Section 4.1)

- ❖ Scope your top-down approach (the pyramid)
- ❖ Define the organisational approach and the related limitations/opportunities
 - ❖ Plot where the CR function/department will be placed
 - ❖ Agree expected roles and responsibilities throughout the pyramid

Do a situational analysis (Section 4.2)

- ❖ Highlight areas of best practice and areas of weakness
- ❖ Assess the different complexities in different regions/departments and the limitations/opportunities this offers
- ❖ Critique other companies to see how you currently measure (benchmarking) and possible future standards to achieve

Do a gap analysis (Section 4.2)

- ❖ Drill into what makes an area strong or weak
- ❖ Highlight successful approaches and transferable projects (easy wins and more complex ones)
 - ❖ Assess the relevance of gaps and their impact in relation to effort to fill
 - ❖ Revisit plan, adapt if necessary, and retain support
 - ❖ Define a general baseline standard and your aspirations for this standard

Initiate and manage the cascade approach (Section 4.3-5)

- ❖ From your analysis set goals for network size by level, division, and region
- ❖ Anticipate that some gaps will be easier to fill than others, and develop an engagement plan
 - ❖ Initiate the cascade and recruit champions
 - ❖ Consider a concurrent bottom-up approach
- ❖ Develop a supportive plan for assets, i.e. identify R&R and how to retain champions
 - ❖ Revisit your original plan for sense-check and suitability
 - ❖ Think in years, as well as months

In the longer term (Section 6)

- ❖ Remember your senior managers
- ❖ Your approach may evolve as the network progresses
- ❖ Update your 3 and 5 year plans for how the network should look, what it will contribute, and if how it runs needs to change
 - ❖ Prepare to adapt – things change!
 - ❖ Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater

What is a CR Champion?



This guide focuses on internal organisational CR champions, harnessing the unconscious and conscious champions. A CR champion represents and promotes the CR cause. Also called change agents or advocates they are critical to the process of CR change, representing the philosophy and implementation of CR in an organisation and embedding and facilitating change, usually of mindset and behaviour.

CR champions represent and promote the philosophy and implementation of CR in an organisation

However CR champions are not initiative- or location-based. Rather, they are committed to causing change AND continuing the work in the long-term. CR champions can be far more strategic, spreading across the entire organisation and spanning rankings, functions, and regions.

The CR champion can be a full time job but may also be someone willing to take on extra responsibilities beyond their day role in order to positively impact on the business. They can better align your business with prevailing ethics and expectations, strengthening your legitimacy to operate, and improve the ethics and business performance of the organisation. Ideally all staff should be CR champions in one form or another, but this guide looks at those mobilised with an aspect of CR in their role and/or given CR as a specific responsibility.

You may have encountered unofficial CR champions in the guise of staff members pushing for a group-wide recycling policy or better use of a community initiative

CR champions are emerging as a powerful tool for embedding CR philosophy into an organisation, creating a 'motorway' from top to bottom and region to region, initiators of innovative and profitable business solutions. Champions sometimes emerge spontaneously. The ad hoc emergence can be organised into a planned approach to embed CR from top down and bottom up. Whether formal or informal, they can be a powerful and cost-effective tool for you to capitalise on and help change the organisation towards the sustainability objectives.

Lloyds TSB: Champions are people at the sharp end of the business engaged in improvement activity or spreading the word. Credible to their peers and accessible, they are a critical organisational asset.

Why do I want CR Champions and a Network?

If your organisation is ready to implement a CR strategy or move from a series of disjointed initiatives to a more joined-up and strategic approach, it is likely you are considering several methods through which to do this:

- ❖ A dedicated CR department or function. This can send a clear message of the importance of CR to the organisation, centralising knowledge and building capacity for implementation of related projects. However by defining a bespoke set of people responsible for CR, these very actions may become separated from the business itself, the business strategy, the people, operations, and from the culture of your organisation.

This separation also does not easily identify or mitigate risk, nor will it be likely to identify or allow you to benefit from opportunities anywhere other than where CR staff sit. Such an approach on its own does not implement or realise the

benefits of CR as well as combining with champions and other steps to embed can. (See a forthcoming Occasional Paper by Odgers and the Doughty Centre for more detail on the evolving CR professional and CR department.)

- ❖ Compulsory embedding of CR actions into the rules and regulations of the organisation. This also sends a clear message of the importance of CR to the organisation – but does this generate cooperation and true change? If your organisational culture is not thus structured this approach can cause 'culture shock' and the rules may only be given lip service.

- ❖ Other tactics include:
 - Assigning a CR board level committee and/or a lead non-executive director; which also sends a clear message from the top of the alignment of CR with business strategy;
 - CR measuring and reporting so that a clear strategy and public set of targets drives the organisation forward;
 - And engaging with stakeholders (especially external stakeholders through an external stakeholder advisory panel) so that the external voice is represented, commitments made, and the organisation can build significant relevance and legitimacy in the eyes of their stakeholders.
- From our interviews 5 clear reasons emerged for why champions and CR networks can be used alongside other tactics:
1. Identifying champions can open connections across the organisation in a cost-effective manner; connecting business divisions and regions, sharing knowledge.
 2. This helps you to uncover hidden assets, build future resources, extend your reach to achieve better regulatory compliance, and capitalise on tacit knowledge.
 3. Utilising peer-to-peer relationships can develop credible two-way interface between global and local, improving CR relevance and corporate risk mitigation and identifying business opportunities from CR and sustainability.
 4. A feedback framework can result, improving knowledge management and allowing closer access to external and internal environments.
 5. Working directly with staff also helps them to become engaged, 'walking the talk'.

Table 1: Benefits realised from a well-planned CR champions network

	Benefits
A formal or explicit network can:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly identify leaders and implementers Clarify roles and expectations Build legitimacy that the network is integral within (part of) the organisation Develop management tools, for example to capture staff motivated by recognition and reward
An informal or implicit network can:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handle the flexibility of expansion or contraction Allow some interpretation at a local level (to build local relevance) Attract members with a genuine interest in CR issues and making a difference to the organisation Capitalise on staff motivation for 'service' (types of staff motivation include reward, recognition, making a difference, and service to others) and those driven by affective motivation (learning and making decisions based on emotion and cognitive experiences)
A well-planned network can:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empower CR champions by providing advice, training, and best practice sharing Collate and organise opportunities available to the organisation, and channel them to places and people who can capitalise on them Show clear ownership of CR horizontally and vertically in the organisation Encourage budget sharing across departments Give moral support to co-workers and clear line of sight to leaders Build visibility and the profile of CR within the organisation Be a cascade system embedding CR into mind-sets: people are influenced by their peers and the CR actions they see happening around them

The CR Champions Network



If you decide internal CR champions are appropriate for your organisation, good practice examples from our participants show that building a 'network' for these champions to operate within is an effective and cost-efficient management method; although developing a concurrent 'bottom-up' (from grass-roots upwards) approach is also an option, detailed later:

4.1 Structuring your network

First plan this network so it will define, recruit, retain, empower, and engage champions and facilitate them in their work. To get this balance of structure with flexibility, design the structure of the network – the order in which it operates and reports – so that it is similar to how your departments currently work with each other:

Plan the structure so it can cascade through the existing levels in your business; consider how big it needs to be to operate without disrupting day-to-day business; and decide where you are best placed to get access to champions so you can simultaneously support them and maintain enough distance from them to push them into action:

- ❖ **Top-down approach:** Our participants took a top-down approach to developing their networks, so ensuring what the 'top' builds allows change to cascade down, creating connections and giving the 'middle' and 'bottom' staffing ranks a structure in which they can operate, innovate, and push back up to the top.

Defining this structure allows planning of what management tools are needed (such as leadership, culture, power, reward) and where to develop cooperation – important when changing the behaviour of staff or motivating champions.¹

Serco: CR is the automatic responsibility of the contract manager [power tools]...historically we are a values-driven organisation...important in recruiting...a motivator [culture tools].

- ❖ **Operational approach:** All our participants agree the network needs to fit with the way the organisation operates and the prevailing organisational culture – whether business units are autonomous from head-quarters or you run a 'command and control' operation.

PwC: We needed to take an approach fitting with PwC's culture...**Reed Elsevier:** If I, from the centre, suggest a change to someone, it may happen over time. But it is much more likely to occur when a colleague suggests it. We listen to our friends more than policy.

- ❖ Where champions fit within the structure can vary. Comparing two consultancies:
 - Accenture define their official 'champions' as influential members of staff (senior partners) at a business unit leadership level who have the power to say 'Do it'.
 - PwC have both senior and junior members of staff as official 'champions', usually a local member of staff influenced by a senior partner.

Both, however, have a network structure supporting and housing their official 'champions'. They both have a clear understanding that the network must mirror their organisations' existing hierarchy, to ensure organisational legitimacy and acceptance.

- ❖ **Size:** CR champion networks vary in size across our participants from 80 to 500 – depending on the level of integration needed, the number of projects that fell under the CR umbrella, and the size of the organisation. TNT is the notable exception for having 150 champions – these champions are full and part-time and therefore the impact they have is significant.
- ❖ **Placement of CR function:** The notable difference between our participants was where they saw themselves positioned (the coordinators of CR strategy and tactics). All agreed that in terms of influence they sat between the top steering committee and those that led the project teams. But while some saw themselves outside the structure others found it important to be between the two aforementioned levels, acting as consultants facilitating top-to-bottom and bottom-up information and decision-making flows.

Therefore, we advise that when you plan the size, reach, and formality of your network you need to appreciate your organisation's unique characteristics, shaping your network around:



- ✓ *Staff understanding of how closely aligned CR is to the business strategy: Should top champions be business strategy decision-makers such as the CEO, or operational implementers such as business unit heads?*
- ✓ *Your expected outcomes from your champions: Is it important champions are key influencers working across borders/functions or should you have implementers within each local department; do you want champions formally recognised and bound to commitments?*
- ✓ *The business issues you face in embedding CR: Do you need champions close to your key communities; should you tell a local business head what the global CR strategy is, or build support and influence to get local buy-in; can you use existing procedural process managers or does the CR function need to build new structures and processes?*
- ✓ *Your current cultural and organisational realities and relationships between the different parts of your business and between HQ and business units: Do you need a central CR budget or allocations within local budgets; do the parts of your business connect horizontally, ensuring group-wide projects/policies work – or does the CR department need to do this?*
- ✓ *The readiness of your organisation for champions and change (change readiness): Are staff interested already or do you need to engage them; are people content running their individual projects or are they pushing for an organised approach/network?*

Examples from the field: Alliance Boots, Reed Elsevier

Richard Ellis recognised the silo mentality [of departments] in Alliance Boots would work against capitalising on the benefits of current CR activities. He identified the need for a network to combat this:

There was a silo mentality at the start. We needed a structure and process that would work, coordinate activities, and integrate them across the business. And we needed a framework that would encourage CR.

Accordingly, he developed the 'critical friend' and 'internal buddy', a buddy system to cross boundaries and connect people from different parts of the business.

At Reed Elsevier the impetus for a network was very different. Reed Elsevier typically employs scientists, lawyers and well-educated staff with a keen interest in a variety of issues – the problem was not encouraging CR, but coordinating it:

The employees wanted a network, so it was going to happen! The organised approach from above met with the ground swell and we only had to fill the gaps.

Reed Elsevier capitalised on this interest, tapping into existing budgets and empowering local champions to set their own KPIs and targets. How they set up the network was influenced by the prevailing organisational culture:

A more formal structure would have clashed with the culture of our organisation.

4.1.1 A sample network

A uniform network structure emerged from our survey. Different titles are used for levels and the word 'champion' is allocated to different levels, but the network structure itself is remarkably similar across participants (Figure 2).

A connected top and bottom (cascade approach): The network structure creates a visual link from top to bottom of the organisation: encouraging volunteers to join; sending a clear message of the importance of its activities; helping to promote downwards spread of the CR strategy.

The levels within the structure (Figure 2) will be familiar to change managers who use 'transition teams'. See Bob Doppelt (Principle at change management consultancy Factor10 Inc) book 'Leading change toward sustainability' for further detail.²

The structure does not exclude a bottom-up approach, rather it builds routes for champions to be 'traffic wardens' – ensuring vertical two-way traffic.

- PwC:** In the central team there is someone responsible for the champions. They provide support, share best practice and pass information to the champions...
- Accenture:** The champion is the point of contact locally, listening from the bottom up...our finger is on the pulse of reality of what the business needs.

Evolution: All network structures evolved from efforts of participants to have the 'top' (central) of the organisation meet with the 'bottom' (regions/departments), blending compulsory attention to CR with voluntary actions from staff. For further information on global, local, or glocal approaches see research by Purdue University (USA) academic Vidhi Chaudhri.³

Project Teams

Project teams are developed around themes (i.e. recycling, energy efficiency, community giving) within business units. The main difference between how participants used teams is how they cross horizontally (i.e. projects cross-department or based in one department/region). All work closely with the CR department who coordinate efforts around the themes with all project teams. This group of champions is the largest of all, closest to external stakeholders (especially suppliers and customers) and are the implementers, or change agents, from within.

Examples of Project Teams:

Serco: Contract champions, reporting to their divisional champion. Also have regional networks for horizontal alignment

PwC: teams of between 2-12 run by local champions, running 2-3 projects at any one time

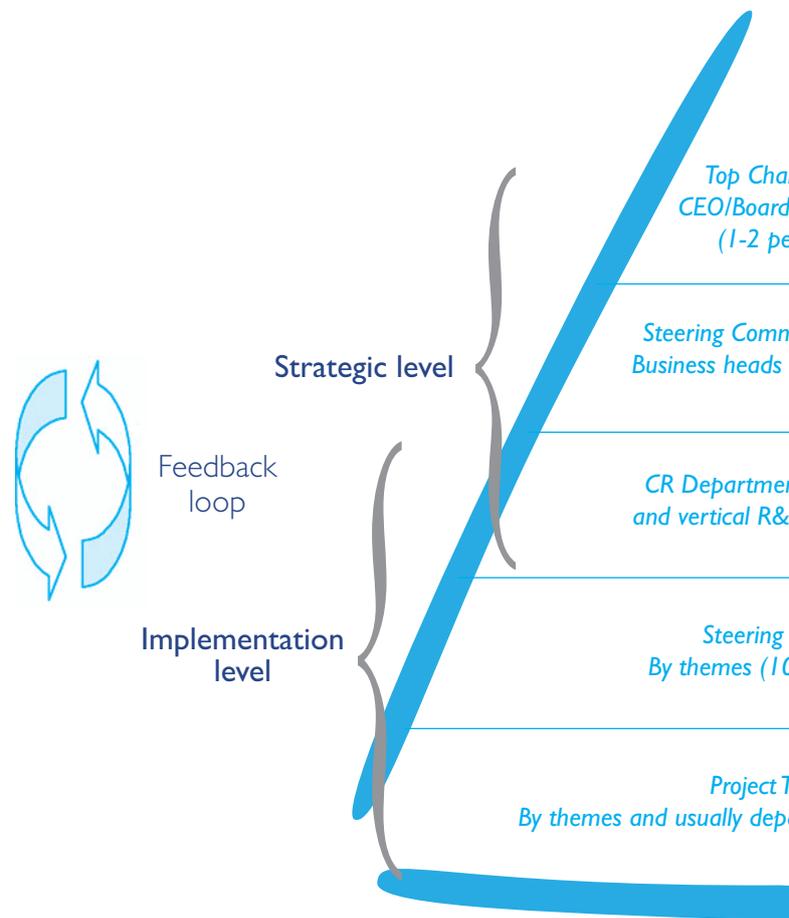


Figure 2: Example

Internal Steering Group

Consisting of staff across the organisation, the Steering Group typically has senior or middle managers with an operations focus. They are recruited or volunteer and champions. They carry out initiatives locally, usually as 'Environment/Green team', 'Community team' or 'Procurement/Supply Chain team'. Importantly, they engage the

Examples of Steering Groups:

Reed Elsevier: Champions are representatives from divisional, operational and geographical areas and form themed teams (e.g. green teams for environment, 'Cares' teams for Community)

PwC: Local champions, estimated 60, engage the line organisation

The Top CR Champion

All participants agree on the importance of a powerful top CR champion (1-2 people) to influence and inspire internal and external stakeholders, with internal credibility and the gravitas to champion a cause. See research from Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship (BCCCC) on the importance of buy-in from the top.⁴ Among our participants a chief executive officer (CEO), managing director, or significant Board member took this role.

Examples of top CR champions:
 Reed Elsevier: the Board and Sir Crispin Davis (CEO)
 Lloyds TBS: An Executive Director and a Group Executive sub-committee

The Steering Committee/Forum

Our participants have a committee of internal senior leaders, typically business unit leads (in line with Harvard Business School professor John P Kotter's step 2 of transforming your organisation; to create a powerful guiding coalition). The Forum members were identified at the CR strategy development stage and invited or nominated – for example at PwC the Community Affairs Board member wrote to each office. Some participants invited key external stakeholders into the Forum, to impact on strategy and garner their support.

Forum members are key igniters for growing the network, recruiting members by influence and/or nomination. They input significantly to overall CR strategy and have responsibility for implementing within their business units, monitoring the interpretation of the strategy by outlying regions, approving yearly plans, and receiving reports of target achievement. They in turn report to the top champion and external stakeholders.

Examples of CR Forum/Steering Committee members:
 Serco: Senior Divisional Leaders
 TNT: Head of Mail, Express, CEO, Financial Officer

Champion:
 member
 (1-2 people)

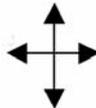
Committee/Forum:
 (5-15 people)

Alignment:
 horizontal
 CR (staff 2-20)

Group:
 (10-50 people)

Teams:
 department (50-400 people)

These levels seem to have the most horizontal and vertical alignment across the organisation



The CR Department

The roles, responsibilities, and scale of CR departments vary. Most participants feel it important that a distinct group of 'internal consultants' are identified for specific CR implementation roles such as reporting, company-wide communications, corporate risk management, indices submissions, and to advise the Forum and coordinate champions.

Who they report to varies (most to the CR Director/CR Board member but at Serco to the Corporate Assurance Group), but all CR directors sit on the Steering Committee/Forum (an important source for power alliances). Generally, the CR teams profiled for this guide develop company-wide initiatives, as the internal consultants, facilitating work in the structure vertically (boundary shakers) and horizontally across the organisation – for example running regional meetings across divisions and sharing best practice across units to compare and learn.

Julia Fuller from ThompsonReuters emphasises the significant time taken coordinating, communicating and leveraging champion's outputs – it should not be underestimated. "The central CR manager needs to watch, steer, prompt and share the greater thinking into the business."

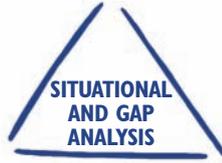
Examples of CR departments:
 Alliance Boots: Richard Ellis + 1
 Accenture: Isabel Naidoo + central teams (est. 12)

network structure

act as business unit
 line organisation.

ment,

4.2 Launching the network: situational and gap analysis



All participants started with a **situational analysis** to assess what their organisation did, its relevance, and how further benefit could be realised, working with existing champions quickly to gather data. ABN-AMRO researched different perceptions of sustainability across their regions, the results of which reinforced the relevance of an explicit global policy and space to customise initiatives at a local level. Alliance Boots audited activities, likening it to joining the dots to get more out of their activities.

Some participants then did a **gap analysis** of current activities, identifying where activities or champions were missing. They looked at other activities across the organisation to see what could be duplicated or be good examples to motivate staff in areas with gaps. This was done initially with network members, but then over time by recruiting staff into the process, encouraging them to take responsibilities (pushing 'gap' ownership further into the business).

Most participants identified 'easy wins' projects that represented the organisation's CR philosophy and were good examples. Research by Queens University (Canada) academic Lindsay McShane supports this approach of showing staff the visible impact of, and giving them close proximity to, the CR philosophy and activities – resulting in validation of and motivation for the CR philosophy and activities.⁵

Accenture assessed problems and opportunities, what local programmes could be combined, and how to make them relevant. Reed Elsevier conducted a gap analysis by business unit and country, asking managing directors in each country to nominate a champion. Over time they started to fill in gaps from top to bottom of the champions network 'pyramid'.

4.3 Launching the network: initiate the cascade approach



Concurrent to the situational and gap analysis, all participants **initiated a cascade approach** to identify and recruit champions. The top champion asked business heads to nominate someone, they asked senior managers to identify and recruit members, who in turn created teams. Some participants found this more challenging in countries only starting in CR (e.g. Poland for one participant), resolving this by first asking for volunteers and then using the network to nominate.

PwC identified champions already involved in community affairs, working with senior partners to encourage them to take on an enhanced role. Accenture did an engagement plan with a CEO who led from the top. TNT cascades CR themes through the CEO, business unit and country managing directors, and the CR teams.

The cascade approach works well vertically for recruiting CR champions. However, if the CR philosophy does not represent the actual culture of the organisation and external environment then credibility can be lost and the cascade system can fail.

The participants take different approaches to how champions are **recruited**:

- ❖ On a voluntary basis, with existing champions encouraging peers to fill a gap (Accenture), to help make CR activity more visible (Serco), or because they already engaged in CR due to company culture (Reed Elsevier).
- ❖ Whether they are nominated without choice – although the only instances found among the participants was during initiation stage of the networks, mostly among senior managers nominated by the Board or CEO.
- ❖ TNT are the notable exception for developing a full-time network of paid champions, recruited and paid for by business units, advising the country on health and safety, legislation, risk mitigation, environmental issues (etc). TNT saw that engaging employees in corporate sustainability was considered an opportunity to instil pride in them and genuinely inspire them, in particular in commitments that extended beyond compliance. Engagement to get countries to pay for their champions was a mixture of influence from above, showing the business case, customers pushing for this expertise, and many countries recognising champions as essential to the business.

Horizontal engagement is more difficult, requiring boundary shakers and brave individuals boldly stepping into other people's territories.

- ❖ **The bottom-up approach** (Section 4.4) is effective for highlighting new individuals.

Alliance Boots supplements this with a buddy system where an inexperienced champion is promised the support of an experienced expert from a different part of the business.

- ❖ **Surface area**, specifically a wide surface area (level of staff connecting to the outside world) helps recruit champions as it draws in the external view of the organisation. This influences how individuals define their organisation and their part in it – driving them to look inward at the value and values of the organisation (see management researcher Chris Worley's article on 'Designing organisations for change' for how staff define their organisation).⁶

Serco's CR champions work closely with communities and regulators due to the nature of their work. *'Stakeholders are driving the need for CR to be closely involved in the business agenda.'*

Controlled growth: PwC highlights the importance of controlling the growth of champion numbers – once the tipping point is reached it becomes more difficult to manage. They recommend adding central staff to coordinate and manage champions, and defining who are 'champions' and who are advocates – especially as the message, risk management, and ownership can weaken as numbers grow (Internal Communications can help mitigate this).

The interviewees found the cascade and engagement efforts slowly introduced the CR network to the organisation, developing contact points, relationships, and **advocates** across all levels.

Once staff were informed, could see what CR meant to the organisation through concrete actions and attitudes, and saw the shape of CR in the organisation they became enthused and supportive. All agreed this was greatly aided by the philosophy of the CR strategy fitting within the culture of their organisation.

Serco: It was about building relationships. It took time to get buy-in and to identify the appropriate contacts across the diverse organisation...initially a lot of work was undertaken to raise the awareness of the benefits of people networks.

Encouraging buy-in: materials were (and continue to be) developed and disseminated to educate staff on the CR strategy and its relevance to them. **Strategic events** are/were also set up to encourage, engage, and reward.

- ❖ Lloyds TSB use a Quality Management self-assessment process to identify gaps and areas for improvement, building corporate responsibility into systems and processes. Running

this consistently over 4 years grew the network as staff are allowed to find the relevance of CR to the business and become familiar with shape and form, consequently becoming motivated and engaged.

- ❖ A dedicated section on intranets for champions, with educational tools, chat rooms, case studies, project tools, contact information, competitions etc (Serco, Reed Elsevier). The use of intranets was substantive among the participants, because:
 - Staff are familiar with company intranets across wide networks.
 - Company intranets are an existing repository for knowledge, and therefore staff are familiar with them and their use is cost-efficient.
- ❖ Several participants also set up knowledge sharing portals, or libraries, where learning is captured and shared and business tools are stored for champions, such as balanced scorecards and facilities to capture data and pass it to the central team (e.g. staff questionnaires at Accenture).
- ❖ A dedicated section on intranets for all staff on the organisational approach to CR and related projects. For example Reed Elsevier run company-wide competitions with prizes and senior management acknowledgement of successes.
- ❖ TNT have developed central data-gathering and reporting tools for champions, structured to report to 5 global indices (e.g. ISO, GRI) so that a baseline standard and reporting can be achieved across the countries.
- ❖ A dedicated section on company's internet sites (e.g. Serco provide detailed information on governing principles, their operational approach, CR reports, and their CR policy standard).
- ❖ Those that took the formal route to managing champions included CR training in staff induction packs and yearly review targets (e.g. Accenture and TNT).
- ❖ All interviewees set up regular teleconferences with champions, periodic fora/meetings for all in the network. Serco also runs regional CR network meetings to share best practice across divisions at a local level and also a bi-annual global CR conference for 'lead' champions.

Accenture: ran a communication campaign to get staff involved in activities. They developed a central tool to log potential volunteering opportunities (once screened by the CR department). Over 1,000 employees signed-up in the first 6 weeks.

Without exception our interviewees agreed the network evolves as CR becomes more embedded and as new challenges are identified, however the benefits they saw of a thought-out approach warrants the effort to plan at the start and adapt gently as you go on.

4.4 A bottom-up approach

A network is good for identifying people with potential to be champions and initiating roll-out across the company. However, fully embedding the strategy in the culture, actions and DNA of the organisation requires a multi-faceted approach. Combining top-down tactics (i.e. creating the organisation's definition of CR, projects, developing peer advocates, and creating tangible results) with a bottom-up approach (providing space and safety for others to voice their opinions, question, and engage) can result in positive responses.

Research by Queens University (Canada) academic Lindsay McShane supports this, showing that placing the 'burden' of CR on a few people can isolate these activities. If staff are told sustainability is the right thing to do then everyone needs to be held accountable to it and be close enough to see the results – a signal that leaders take it seriously.

Some participants (e.g. Lloyds TSB) ran open **staff fora**, using subjects identified from the situational and gap analysis and plotting them on a scorecard. Using personal influence and the cascade approach they recruited members to the fora. It was important that participants led the meetings, receiving material beforehand and using meetings to discuss gaps and opportunities.

From these fora individuals formed into teams (workstreams) and took projects back to their departments, where they in turn influenced others to get engaged and attend future forums.

Lloyds TSB: Each year they did the self-assessment. Key people encouraged relevant senior managers to attend. They became engaged and the next year brought others with them. This was critical to developing and delivering their strategy.

Boutique CR consultancy Corporate Culture emphasise the importance of an organisation knowing how to listen and act at a local and organisational level. A variety of methods can help achieve this – for example proactive stakeholder management, taking a customer-focused approach, and developing two-way communication points that feed into the decision-making processes. The CR champion network can enable this listening, for example by using the network to mobilise the 'silent majority'.

ABN-AMRO run projects to engage from the bottom-up. They mix planned change (eg. policy implementation) with emergent change – harnessing the ideas and energy of staff networks, through using appreciative enquiry and building relationships.

Example from the field: ABN-AMRO

The Human Resources team coordinated a Sustainability "Community of Practice", to give staff the space (for those without positional power access to a place to share new ideas and contribute to strategy) and safety (from blame or politics) to express opinions, explore concepts and work on shared initiatives. Key to the success is openness to unexpected good ideas emerging, and giving permission to innovators to take responsibility for ideas.

The Community of Practice took the form of a monthly telephone conference, inviting anyone to call in to share ideas for change (any change). The organisers initiated conversations by discussing upcoming policies, starting conversations that shared knowledge and input to upcoming tactics. From these calls smaller groups voluntarily formed, turning ideas into proposals and into workstreams to implement. The initial calls were very well received and quickly grew because of the space and safety guaranteed.

They also ran open invitation face-to-face meetings ('Initiative Takers' Meetings) with a broad remit to inspire and activate people with ideas to improve the bank, managed by an external facilitator. From these meetings the facilitator grouped ideas, connected people, and business initiatives formed – for example an employee-led initiative to create a speaker series on sustainability resulted in the formation of a New Energy Technology Group in a client-facing function.

The CR Champion

5.1 Role and responsibilities

5.1.1 CR managers are key champions

Attributes: 5 common themes emerged when we analysed and prioritised what unique attributes in our participating company's CR managers/directors contributed to the success of champions' networks:

- ❖ True passion for CR and ability to stay updated on trends and stakeholder viewpoints
- ❖ Heavy-weight relationship managers, good at persuading, influencing, and inspiring
- ❖ Skilled change managers
- ❖ Enablers, not micro-managers. This involves a degree of risk taking and trust-building skills
- ❖ Good insight into the business – understanding how the CR philosophy integrates into the business strategy, with a strong business focus on CR

For further analysis of CR managers see research by Nottingham University professor Wayne Visser:⁷

5.1.2 Champions

As discussed in Section 3, participants use the term 'champion' for different levels within the network, most typically Steering Group or Project Team leaders.

However, all participants have a clear idea of their expectations from their champions even when the formality of roles and responsibilities vary from voluntary to compulsory. Accenture and TNT were notable for having formalised job descriptions for champions, used in recruitment.

Roles and responsibilities can be divided into two:

1. **Personal traits** (similar to a change manager): a passion for CR, interest in the external view; building relationships (Serco); influencers and persuaders; 'ability to make it personal' (Reed Elsevier); and change agents, facilitators, networkers, and communicators are also traits to look for.
2. **Concrete actions:** translate central strategy for local relevance; either develop or feed into yearly plans at a local level; project manage initiatives; coordinate teams; gather data and report to central; update line management and central CR team; give talks/presentations to internal and external stakeholders; match internal needs with opportunities from external partners (PwC), and advise on specific legislation (TNT).

Examples from the field: Reed Elsevier champion R&R

- ❖ The local point of contact in the network
- ❖ Report to their MD/CEO on progress and feedback
- ❖ Report to the CR team and CR Forum centrally
- ❖ Attend bi-monthly teleconferences and influence central approach and policy
- ❖ Champion issues and projects with peers outside of networks, external stakeholders, and CR team centrally
- ❖ Coordinate local projects and teams
- ❖ Collect data and feed to central CR team
- ❖ Develop local CR calendar, along central themes and update on a monthly basis
- ❖ Attend annual face-to-face champions meetings to share good practice

Portrait of a passionate champion

Reed Elsevier: Randy Dinnison, LexisNexis Green Team Champion for Dayton Ohio



"My role involves many ongoing awareness campaigns – from leading "green team" meetings for interested volunteers to promoting recycling practices and procedures to all staff.

Reporting utility consumption for multiple buildings is a real challenge. Collecting utility data from numerous landlords

and suppliers, then providing detailed annual reports and analysis is quite time-consuming.

Organizing special recycling drives, events and volunteer days is also a major part of this role. The green teams have shown great interest and participation in activities like our annual shoe collection where we collected over 2,600 pairs of shoes and donated them to local charities for reuse. Investigating equipment upgrades, making the business cases and seeking funds is always a challenge.

Patience and persistence are important – many projects are eventually implemented after they are properly prioritized with other competing business investments. Water conservation has been a recent focus for Reed Elsevier and we have set a pretty aggressive schedule for the replacement of conventional urinals with waterless units. Our real-world testing proved an annual water savings of about 25,000 gallons per urinal, payback just under two years. This is a very exciting and practical improvement for the environment and the bottom line!"

5.2 Retention

Churn: The network will experience churn, as champions drop-out or parts of the business are sold. All participants find that gaps are filled, whether by higher level champions nominating someone or by a new volunteer motivated by the ongoing network and bottom-up activities from employees.

All participants agree that retention is affected by the passion champions have for CR, needing 80% will, 20% imposition (Accenture). Both Reed Elsevier and Accenture agree that a degree of churn is good as it invites new ideas.

Recognition: Participants also have different approaches to the recognition of CR champions:

- ❖ some use (usually successfully) personal engagement and cultural expectations to fulfil tasks (Alliance Boots)
- ❖ some get line managers to spotlight CR activities as part of the expected activities for developing into promotion (Accenture)
- ❖ others incorporate targets into performance reviews (e.g. TNT, and at Lloyds TSB some champions voluntarily incorporate CR targets into their performance review), rewarding accordingly through promotion or bonuses. The choice to take this approach is on the wish-list of some of the participants, seeing it as an efficient way to speed up recruitment and engagement.

The approach participants' use to recognise champions reflects their existing approach to overall reward and recognition schemes. Consultancies tend to have in place existing performance motivation schemes based on bonuses, whereas other participants reward generally through public recognition, yearly staff awards, promotions, and away days – but not with bonuses – and therefore they encourage CR recognition in the same way. The only CR champions to be paid for their duties are at ABN-AMRO, where 3 full time champions work in countries where a clear business need has been identified, and TNT, with a network of over 80 full-time champions.

Champion fatigue is something many participants see, and make effort to keep champions engaged and encouraged by:

- ❖ Ensuring champions feel empowered to do their job, by providing the necessary training, personal support, materials and local leadership support. 'Empowering' helps retention over 'command and control' if the champions are voluntary
- ❖ Changing topics on the agenda each year to keep people interested (e.g. under 'Environment' rotate from water to carbon to waste)
- ❖ Capitalise on external events, e.g. World Environment Day or World AIDS Day, to run events internally to engage (competitions, fun events, launch-related projects) – Reed Elsevier and ABN-AMRO find this works well
- ❖ Send champions on projects with external stakeholders, e.g. Earthwatch exhibitions locally and abroad to help in environmental research and observation (Reed Elsevier)
- ❖ Run yearly excellence meetings for champions, e.g. TNT run a 3-4 day meeting with external speakers, rewarding and sharing practice
- ❖ TNT also link CR target achievement for business unit leaders and champions to company bonus schemes, whereby a percentage of their bonuses are reliant on CR performance.
- ❖ Rotate chairs of teams so all team members have the opportunity to lead
- ❖ Run high profile global events, e.g. Shoe Drive and competitions that champions can lead on and roll-out locally (Reed Elsevier)
- ❖ Provide regular communication and support, and space to communicate with other champions so they don't feel isolated
- ❖ Ensure line managers, senior managers, and the central CR team give positive and public encouragement, profiling champions in their department
- ❖ Some include CR achievements into yearly personal targets, with bonuses reliant on outcomes (at Accenture this is part of performance management)
- ❖ Serco run regional meetings across all CR themes and functions with an open agenda, which brings champions together with space to find solutions to a variety of topics

The View from Above



6.1 Global vs local

Umbrella approach: All participants stress the importance of an umbrella approach to CR that allows flexible interpretation by regions and divisions. Two tips emerged:

- ❖ Have a clear but loose central strategy that is relevant to local needs, especially as different markets have different paces and interpret CR differently (Accenture)
- ❖ Anticipate that this could dilute overall impact, and mitigate (PwC)

These are actually difficult to achieve: by trial and error participants found it useful for regional teams to set their own targets based on centrally aligned topics (e.g. carbon neutrality) under key themes (e.g. Environment), and chaired by a regional champion reporting to central head-quarters. The scorecards used by Lloyds TSB helped identify local targets within central themes. TNT set key performance indicators at a country level with consultation and approval from the central CR team.

Voluntary versus compulsory: Deciding what is mandated and what is voluntary requires discussion between central and regional, especially as a topic that could be mandatory in one country could not be in another – e.g. carbon neutrality in Sweden versus assigned volunteer days in India.

Global baseline standards: Global baseline standards will be difficult to implement across countries with very different cultural norms, business standards, and understanding of CR. Most of our participants are still working on this. ABN-AMRO has a global baseline and work to lift standards in the countries at a lower level of achievement so that over time they can raise the global baseline. TNT chose 5 global standards (OHSAS 18001, ISO 14001, SA 8000, ISO 9001 and Investors in People) that business units must achieve and maintain – the submission exercises alone aid units to understand the importance of CR and sets a global baseline standard.

Reed Elsevier: Cross-border/department contact among champions is one of the most difficult challenges.

Accenture: We need to get better at sharing best practice across the forum.

It also makes reporting and CR indices submissions difficult, and most participants selected which indices to submit to based on the relevance of categories to the business and also allowed flexibility and regionalisation. In some instances preparing for, and grade received, can highlight issues and be a catalyst for change, or be a significant learning process (TNT).

Lloyds TSB: A lower score against the top 20 'Best Companies' benchmark in 'giving something back' actually propelled engagement and pushed this up people's agendas.

Many commented that they hope in the future their organisation will be ready to move away from targets and local goals towards good quality group standards.

6.2 Engaging senior staff

An umbrella view is also needed when engaging senior management. Participants recognise (and plan) the importance of continued engagement of the Board and business heads across regions and divisions.

Appreciating, and showing appreciation, for the difficulty in balancing global standards with their local responsibilities, and ensuring their 'bottom' (internal) and 'top' local external voices are heard, helps engage senior management.

- ❖ Engagement tactics alter when involving senior managers, and the organisation-wide communications and events discussed earlier are not sufficient on their own.
- ❖ All participants agreed that engaging this group relies on relationship management, using a mixture of dialogue and email, flaunting 'easy wins', and rallying support from the Board and those that fall under the responsibility of the senior managers.
- ❖ TNT highlights the importance of middle management – when senior management see the benefit they quickly 'get it', but when middle managers see the benefit(s) then – as the operators – a significant step forward is made.
- ❖ Senior managers can either be strong enablers or powerful saboteurs (see B.C.C.C.C. research).⁴ Grass-roots voluntary CR champions can be of limited effectiveness unless there is a middle and senior management structure supporting their activities. If a senior manager has not made sense of CR they may either see CR activities as a disruption to their department and block a champions activities or send the message that CR is not important here. If however they support the champion then a clear message can be sent to surrounding staff of the relevance and importance of CR. See Doughty Centre Director David Grayson's article on the CR Management Black Hole.⁸

6.3 Planning for the future

All participants took a period of years to establish their CR champion networks. During this time they continued to:

- ❖ Support champions. As new champions are recruited they need change management and/or sustainability training.
- ❖ Give moral support, especially to isolated smaller countries, ensuring monthly contact with central or cross-regional telephone conferences.
- ❖ Give advice, for example for yearly planning cycle, targets, and managing accountability.
- ❖ Ensure that 'top' to 'bottom' of the network are always visibly connected and in contact so that momentum does not wane as new change programmes are introduced.
- ❖ Share best practice examples and 'easy wins' across the whole organisation.
- ❖ Some are exploring integrated management systems, so that CR does not have a bespoke assessment process, rather one that is included in existing systems (TNT, Lloyds TSB).

Serco: The success of CR activity is being validated by the contribution the work makes to business wins. Champions then understand how integrated it is.

TNT: See that engaging employees in corporate sustainability is considered an opportunity to instil pride in them and genuinely inspire them, in particular in commitments that extended beyond compliance.

6.3.1 Budgets

Budgets are, and will continue to be, a challenge for all participants – divided between wanting a central budget for projects not fitting neatly into one region or department versus having projects owned by departments/divisions. This is because when departments allocate their own money their commitment to project success, ownership, and CR embedding is strengthened.

As Alliance Boots commented, if local regions pay for a project and screen for relevance to business and CR philosophy, they benefit. Serco found this important as it shifted thinking of CR as extra spend to assessing the value of spend from a wider type of return available.

Only a few participants started with a healthy central CR budget, for example Accenture from the Board, enabling them to quickly capitalise on opportunities and develop sophisticated tools. Many other participants commented that in the future a central budget could enable them further:

Alliance Boots: ...a central budget to take on some of the opportunities to do things that don't match other people's priorities but would be beneficial from a CR standpoint.

Yearly cycles: Each participant also introduced yearly planning cycles, undertaken by a central CR team and each region. The level of voluntary versus compulsory varied across participants, however many now have CR integrated into business planning. Themes are set within the key elements of the CR strategy (i.e. People), each theme is broken down further into aspirations, and then targets set to those aspirations with measurements that show progress/lack of progress and why.

Examples from the field: Serco, Alliance Boots

- ❖ Each division of Serco now provides a strategy for each of their CR themes, with yearly targets feeding from the aspirations, reviewing target achievement cyclically.
- ❖ Each Alliance Boots region does a 5 year plan with KPIs, renewed each year with projects assessed. Approved by the Board of each region, it is signed off by the global CR Board who ensures regional Boards own the delivery and are accountable to achieving targets.

6.3.2 The future role of champions

Champion roles alter over time, due to:

1. **Promotion.** As they become more senior they take on new roles such as mentoring. In the longer term this actually further embeds champions.

Alliance Boots: We got very positive support from people on the ground. **PwC:** Champions tend to move into more senior roles in the organisation and then they in turn influence others.

2. **CR becoming more embedded** into everyday actions. None think the role of champion will become redundant, as new issues are always emerging. As the organisation becomes more able to sign up to global indices (e.g. GRI) experienced champions will always be needed. However, participants envisage their champions becoming internal consultants, data collectors, and mentors. This is a sign of successfully changing mindset to the point that CR is considered in everyday decisions and no longer a bespoke set of actions.

Reed Elsevier: As policies become embedded they eventually become 'rubber stamped' and are no longer seen as a change initiative.

PwC: They are considering putting targets into job descriptions and KPIs.

Alliance Boots: CR is now part of the induction programme for all staff.

Summary

All participants emphasise the critical role their CR champions and champion network have in embedding CR into their organisation. The benefits of CR champions and champion networks have been clearly described here, but we strongly suggest that a champion network is not the only solution you take to embedding CR. All of our participants engage in many other concurrent activities, top down and bottom up, and their network is one part of a multi-pronged strategy.

The role of the CR manager therefore needs to include the development of facilitation skills, in order to support such employee networks. The process for developing and running the network (Figure 1) can work for you if you make it flexible enough to customise to your organisation's unique characteristics and environment.

Moving forward with an established network also requires some experimentation, and it must be stressed that this is not a finite project that once implemented is at an end.

Reed Elsevier: There is still so much to do. The coordination is intense; keeping communication channels open, constantly brokering deals...it's not always perfect.

A final thought:

Have humility – it is not always about getting it right or knowing all the answers!

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Sense and Sustainability – David Grayson Inaugural Lecture (2007)

The Doughty Centre Year One Report to Stakeholders (2008)

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