

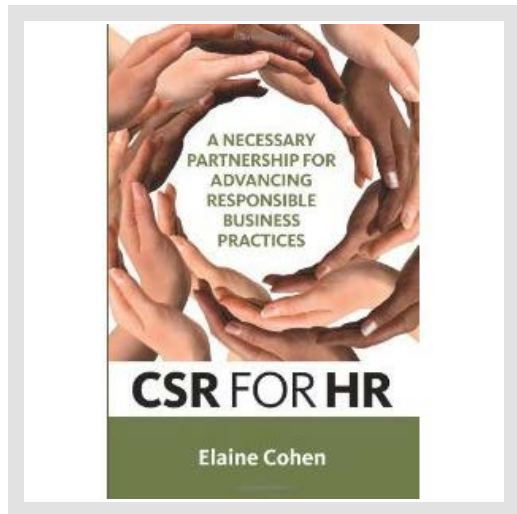


← The S.W.I.T.C.H. diamond – an analogy for success in sustainability and becoming 'future ready'

The S.W.I.T.C.H. Diamond Areas (1) – Stakeholder Readiness →

ABOUT THIS BOOK

CS'HR should focus on impact OF employees instead of impact ON employees to help integrate sustainability - a reflection of Elaine Cohen's book 'CSR for HR'



If one looks at the development steps of CSR in the last decade it became painfully clear that the paradigm change towards sustainability needed to be implemented in all company's functions. Overcoming the silo thinking to empower better and a more holistic awareness-building and integration of CSR was/is obviously needed if an organization will also thrive in the future. All in all we need to admit that we have been extremely busy with the technicalities part of this task, often forgetting the people part of the story. It is so easy to believe that if an organization has done its homework on management systems, data systems, governance, reporting and measurement, one could wait for the outcomes to simply come as a given. One of most often forgotten pieces in the puzzle was the Human Resources function of an organization.

Finally there is help! Elaine Cohen, one of the most active bloggers in the field, living in Israel, and running Beyond Business Ltd., a small CSR consultancy there, has created an enormously useful baseline through her book 'CSR for HR – A necessary partnership for advancing responsible business practices', a must read for everybody who either works in the HR function and wants to develop a view on how to support CSR in their daily life, or for everybody outside the HR function looking for arguments why the HR function has an important role to play and needs to overcome some genuine mental stereotypes.

Elaine uses a nice plot for a whole array of protagonists that would argue for and against a role of HR in CSR: her main protagonist Sharon is actually one of those. Over a couple of weeks Sharon goes through a metamorphosis from being an HR Manager and more and more becoming a CSHR Manager. The nice way of telling the story in a plot like this is that more or less all arguments that one could run against in this challenging metamorphosis comes back in the book, and in that sense delivers refreshing yet convincing arguments any reader can use from the next day onwards.

Another important point to make about Elaine's book is that she has interwoven the plot with a lot of readymade materials (slides, checklists, book summaries and articles) that can be used as blueprints for readers to start their own pilgrimage. In essence, reading Elaine's book saves the reader a lot of time reading other articles and books.

One of the main takeaways also having read Michael Porter's newest article 'Creating shared value' in HBR 1/2011, is how the book already plays very well into the needed change that HR also needs to make, namely the shift from 'HR as an impact ON staff' towards using the HR function to 'create an impact OF staff'.

To sum it up: Elaine Cohen's book is the right book at the right moment, written in a very useful way that

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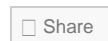
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makes it 'ready to use' from day 1 onwards. There is no excuse any longer for HR practitioners to ignoring CS'HR' due to the lack of a 'cooking book' of recipes. The roadmap how to embed is included in the book as well – of course!

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