

Hartz & Minds 25: Silver Anniversary edition

This is the 25th edition of *Hartz & Minds*, the vehicle for Corporate Hartz to share useful ideas and expert opinions on topics related to corporate social responsibility, diversity, nonprofit strategy, social entrepreneurship, and family philanthropy.

Consider this topic to be gift-wrapped with a large silver bow:
“How do I get into Corporate Social Responsibility work?”

Every week, I receive at least one email asking this question, on behalf of the sender or the sender’s cousin, neighbor, or colleague. For 20+ years, I have been offering advice and referrals on a case-by-case basis. For this special *Hartz & Minds*, we present Corporate Hartz’s perspective on professional CSR occupations.

CSR is part of everyone’s job. If you work in a business, there are opportunities to contribute to the bottom line and improve society. Integrate responsible principles into your existing role and unit and be available to help others. Partner with vendors or customers. Develop products or services that consume fewer natural resources. Share your ideas on decreasing costs or increasing revenues through inter-sector partnerships (business & government & nonprofit).

Most companies promote from within. Connect with the CSR professionals and help them do their jobs better. Offer to lead an initiative or research an issue with them. Volunteer program? Donations? Affinity groups adopting meaningful charities? If this function is not stand-alone, reach out to human resources, marketing, sales, purchasing, or legal departments to express your interest. You will be top of mind and experienced when an internal opportunity arises.

There is CSR formal education. From Harvard’s Kennedy School to Boston College’s Center for Corporate Citizenship in the Carroll School of Management. From CSR Asia, to mastersstudies.com, to the University of Nottingham. Clearly, these options did not exist 20 years ago, but a little research will yield a program for you.

Subject matter experts are always in demand. From Architecture to Agriculture, from Technology to Zoology, specialists can leverage their expertise to develop and implement advantageous inter-sector partnerships (private, public, independent). Look for businesses in your industry or who buy-from or sell-to those companies.

Serve in civic organizations. Nonprofits are supported by individuals, businesses, charities, and (sometimes) governments. Lead a fundraising event, work on the strategic plan, recruit volunteers, collect in-kind donations, or be a member of the board of directors. Through your investment, you will gain experience and expand your network. This is particularly useful if your goal is in the CSR professional area.

So, the next time your daughter’s roommate’s boyfriend wants to “get into Corporate Social Responsibility work,” send him to www.corporatehartz.com. He can click on *Hartz & Minds* and read for himself. Of course, I’ll still answer email.