

## RESOURCE

### Corporate Social Responsibility: From Principles to Profit

**Publisher** BBC Worldwide Learning (020 8433 1641)  
**Price** £495

This video is in the style of an informative BBC 2 documentary. In 50-minutes, it effectively makes the argument that CSR is more than a passing fad and points out that many companies see a powerful business case for putting it into practice.

Sensibly, the video does not try to do too much. It tackles the basic questions people have about CSR: "what is it?" and "why bother?" The answer offered to the first question

is that CSR is about treating stakeholders fairly and maintaining open lines of communication with them, including customers, suppliers and employees. And companies should bother with it because it can affect their reputation and bottom line.

The video proceeds via a series of case studies of companies that are making a good job of demonstrating their CSR credentials and others who have done less well. The unfortunate occasion on which Gerald Ratner insulted customers by suggesting a prawn sandwich would probably last longer than gold earrings sold at his shops is replayed. But most of the footage is more positive, with a lively mix of vox pop and professional comment.

Clive Mather, former chairman of Shell UK, speaks with transparent sincerity about the company's struggle to balance what the company believed was technically the right answer for dealing with a superannuated



GREAT COMPANY: LEO MARTIN OF THE GOOD CORPORATION FEATURES IN THE FILM

oil rig against the reputational damage this would cause them. Transport company DHL struggles to improve its fuel efficiency and reduce noise pollution from air traffic, and talks of the need for constant engagement with the local community.

The video contains a useful section on companies' relationships with their employees. Examples from Ladbrokes and ARM do a good

job of showing how treating staff with respect is linked to increasing profitability. This will come as no surprise to people familiar with the findings of CIPD research into the impact of people management practices on business performance. But the material on flexible working, creating a family atmosphere and robust lines of communication with employees is well chosen and convincingly put across.

The video is supported by a helpful set of notes with additional case studies and analysis. It is not specifically targeted at HR. One limitation for practitioners considering using it in their own organisation is that it does not begin to address the key issue of "embedding" CSR in organisational culture. For this purpose, the CSR competency framework published last year by the Department of Trade and Industry is much more valuable. But the video could certainly be useful in helping managers and students begin to get to grips with a subject that many still find puzzling.

**Mike Emmott**  
CIPD adviser, employee relations

● A number of CIPD branches are putting on CSR events in the coming months. The CSR Competency Framework can be downloaded from the CSR Academy website at [www.csracademy.org.uk](http://www.csracademy.org.uk)

## NEWLY PUBLISHED: CSR ROUND UP

### The Embedded Corporation

**Author** Sanford M Jacoby  
**Publisher** Princeton University Press (01243 843209)  
**Price** £22.99  
**ISBN** 0 691 11999 6

HR provides a window on many of the corporate governance and employee relations issues in organisations. Jacoby's book charts developments in large Japanese and US corporations, taking readers inside the headquarters of a dozen firms to see how decisions are made in different industries and nations.

Studying what goes on in corporate headquarters – and where HR fits into the hierarchy of power – offers a vantage point for answering important questions such as: "What should be the

balance of power between shareholders and others who have a stake in corporate decision?"

### Investing in Corporate Social Responsibility

**Author** John Hancock  
**Publisher** Kogan Page (020 7278 0433)  
**Price** £55 **ISBN** 0 74944 147X

Hancock looks at recent corporate-ethics issues and the damage that revelations of unethical practice can do to stock markets. He gives guidance on areas such as the principles of ethical business and corporate governance best practice.

The guide also includes a directory of 300 companies listed on the FTSE4Good Index and shows how the companies fit the criteria.

### Faith in Governance

**Authors** Michael Willis and Michael Fass  
**Publisher** Industrial Christian Fellowship (0131 524 9890)  
**Price** £12.99  
**ISBN** 0 900487 01 1

Examining the role of the director, this book puts the "f-word" – the fiduciary duty of the director – back into governance.

After an exploration of the current corporate governance issues, the authors develop a model of the director as "good steward" by examining issues such as power and leadership.

They point out the link between good governance and the development of innovative governors who will also be those most likely to build successful companies.