ABSTRACT

Businesses are under increased scrutiny from internal and external stakeholders. A recent study by the Reputation Institute, a well-respected consulting firm, determined that 42% of a company's public reputation is based on their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) plan. For successful CSR adoption, a thorough planning phase and integration of CSR in core business processes is needed for achieving effective long-term CSR practices. An organization's CSR planning should spawn from already generated ideas from the organization's corporate identity (CI).

A small private supply company is under pressure to share their environmental data (carbon footprint, GHG, etc.). Currently, the company has some resistance amongst senior leaders with respect to implementing a CSR plan. The need to report on environmental data has been growing for some time and has now become business critical. The president of the organization is supportive in moving forward with this initiative and asking for a 'how-to' recommendation.

METHOD

A small private company, NAC Enterprises (alias) has requested assistance from one of their employees to create a 'how-to' plan for implementing CSR. Through an inductive approach, interviews were conducted with various leaders in NAC Enterprises to learn about their perspectives of CSR. In analyzing the interviews, patterns emerged regarding the willingness of leaders to support or oppose CSR.

FINDINGS

Upon analyzing the interviews, it is apparent that this case study can be analyzed in multiple ways. We selected Grant's Resource Theory of Competitive Advantage, Kotter's 8 Step Change Theory and Systems theory for this particular scenario. Implementing a CSR Plan is complicated, and we would like the learner to provide their responses based on a theory, without proposing all possible theories.

Grant's Theory provides the learner with a look as to why this change is important. The theory argues that the sustainability of any business innovation is based upon (1) the internal resources of the firm offering it, (2) the firm's capabilities in using those resources, (3) the competitive advantage to the firm of its resources and capabilities, (4) the attractiveness of the market in which it competes, and (5) the innovation's contribution to financial performance of the firm. This case provides a foundation for students to evaluate Grant's Theory.

Kotter's Change Theory provides the learner with the ability to evaluate the change. In this case, there is a sense of urgency to the change, and by having learners work through the change model, they will be able to identify and discuss the various scenarios related to change.

Lastly, learners should realize that the changes needed for the firm in the case study are not able to be completed linearly (siloed); the implementation of a CSR Plan is a whole firm initiative as one change affects another area.

Overall, with the case designed as is, by working through the theories and the representative firm, we have been able to start developing a CSR Plan.

CLASSROOM EXECUTION:

The learning objectives are:

1. Students will be able to research, evaluate, analyze, and then generate a SWOT (situational analysis) and develop strategies for the organization.

2. Students will be able to analyze internal capabilities, then determine the competitive advantage of implementing a CSR Plan and apply the solution for the organization.

3. Students will be able to analyze stakeholder needs and internal capabilities, then determine the change management strategy and apply the solution for the organization.

4. Students will be able to examine, decide and create recommendations for use of linear versus systems theory in this organization.

In terms of discussion, this case study is rich with change theory and systems theory concepts. Discussion regarding which change theory can be used; if systems theory is appropriate and the pros and cons of each would provide students with a greater understanding of the complexities of implementing something new at a firm.

SESSION DISCUSSION AND OBJECTIVES:

The MOBTS virtual conference provides a rich audience for this case, as this case study is rich with change theory and systems theory concepts, the core of MOBTS. In presenting this case, we would be able to:

1. Determine and refine the instructor's manual for the case; including, but not limited to the length of time to complete the questions, additional resources which would also be beneficial, and develop a rubric for grading of the case.
2. Examine, evaluate and redesign the questions and case with feedback provided by the conference participants to improve the strength of the case.

3. Obtain feedback about other questions or areas which can also be studied with this case, which would be more applied (i.e. develop a CSR within a framework, develop a balanced scorecard for implementation of the CSR strategy, etc.), rather than focusing on theoretical and organizational behaviors.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

It is recommended that this case be used either entirely in-class (with appropriate social distancing) or virtual. A hybrid model (where some students are in class and others online) may result in less effective discussions.

Scenario 1: Time available 1.5 hrs

All students are provided 10 minutes to read the case. Facilitator randomly creates groups of 4-5 students and assigns one question per group (there are currently 6 questions). Alternatively, depending on group size, 2 questions per group may be assigned. Facilitator provides the question(s) and associated references to the students. Students have 20 minutes to answer the question(s) assigned. Upon return to class, a spokesperson for each group provides their proposals (5 min). Remaining 30 minutes is class dialogue on the case, alternative solutions.

Scenario 2: Time available 1 hr

Time: 15 minutes: In the previous class, students are provided the case, questions and reference list, and the facilitator randomly creates groups of 4-5 students and assigns one question per group (there are currently 6 questions). Alternatively, depending on group size, 2

questions per group may be assigned. Students work outside of class to answer the question(s) assigned.

Time: 1 hr: At the next class: Upon return to class, a spokesperson for each group provides their proposals (5 min). Remaining 30 minutes is class dialogue on the case, alternative solutions.

Scenario 3: The case is assigned to each student with a due date in a week or two depending on class requirements. It is strongly recommended that the students discuss their responses to the questions either in small groups for 15 minutes or discuss some key takeaways. Information should then be shared with the class.

CONDUCTING THIS CASE STUDY WITH YOUR ATTENDEES IN THIS SESSION:

The authors would appreciate the ability to conduct this case with the attendees at the virtual session. This is a wonderful learning opportunity for us as well, and we look forward to receiving the feedback from the attendees to improve the quality of the case, as well as be able to receive ideas about different teaching guides which could be developed for this case.