



Creative Economies & Entrepreneurship



Youth Education & Development



Cultural Diversity



Green Industries & Environmental Preservation



Nation Branding



Globalization & Inclusive Business

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To Engage in Corporate Cultural Diplomacy Activities

ICD Publications - Cultural Diplomacy Outlook 2014



Socially Responsible Investments



Corporate Social Responsibility

Definitions

What is “Cultural Diplomacy?”

“Cultural Diplomacy may best be described as a course of actions, which are based on and utilize the exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture or identity, whether to strengthen relationships, enhance socio-cultural cooperation or promote national and global interests. Cultural diplomacy can be practiced by either the public sector, private sector or civil society.”

Cultural diplomacy derives its importance from the worldwide need for exchange and dialogue between cultures, which is vital to ensuring and fostering peace and stability across the globe. In an increasingly globalized and interdependent world, in which the proliferation of mass communication technology ensures we all have greater access to each other than ever before, the significance for cultural diplomacy has never been greater.

Cultural diplomacy, when taught and applied at all levels, possesses the unique ability to influence “Global Public Opinion” and the ideology of individuals, communities, cultures or nations, which can accelerate the realization of the 5 principles below. By accomplishing the first principle, one enables the second, which in turn enables the third until the fifth ultimate principle of global peace and stability is achieved.

The five principles are:

1. Respect & Recognition of Cultural Diversity & Heritage
2. Global Intercultural Dialogue
3. Justice, Equality & Interdependence
4. The Protection of International Human Rights
5. Global Peace & Stability



“Corporate Cultural Diplomacy”

Corporate Cultural Diplomacy activities are corporately funded programs that can accelerate the realization of the 5 principles outlined above.

The activities cover a wide spectrum of different fields and stakeholders with the purpose of encouraging the exchange of cultural practices and values, promoting intercultural dialogue and respect as well as global values of justice, equality, human rights, global peace and stability.

These activities include a wide range of forms, such as the engagement in higher education programs and educational exchange, intercultural exchange programs, youth and young leaders programs, international conferences & cultural events, engagement in particular thematic programs or initiatives in the fields such as Human Rights, arts, sports, music and film programs, as well as research programs.

The importance for corporations to engage in cultural diplomacy is increasing as they continue to weave themselves into the fabric of today’s global society and without their understanding and support of civil society and other cultures around the world, it will not be possible to overcome cultural barriers and conflicts.

Therefore engagement in corporate cultural diplomacy can significantly compliment successful performance of corporations and become a “must include” in the corporate development process for the presence and future.

Benefits for Corporations

To Engage in Corporate Cultural Diplomacy Activities

In the last decades, private sector corporations have developed successful corporate social responsibility departments (CSR) and adapted socially responsible investment (SRI) policies, ethics and rules. Engagement in Corporate Cultural Diplomacy will create a more favorable impression of the Corporation and can complement and promote the work of these CSR departments of corporations and therefore improve their image in sustainable ways. Research has proven that consumers will view the firm more favorably if it supports social programs and are more likely to engage with and purchase from a firm that supports such causes.

Corporations can benefit in significant ways from being involved in Corporate Cultural Diplomacy activities. Below is a selection of examples.



A. Contribution to Corporate Brand Image

Corporate Cultural Diplomacy can contribute to the strengthening of a corporation's brand image in a number of ways, such as by creating a more positive public image, demonstrating and publicizing the corporate brand values, and positioning the corporate image as that of an innovator. Below is a selection of examples.

Positive Public Image

The growing global protest movements and the increase of dissatisfaction of the public at both the national and global levels will definitely continue to increase the pressure on the private sector worldwide. Engagement with cultural diplomacy activities can present the corporation as being connected to people and citizens from all walks of life, and by doing so will help to overcome the gap between the private sector and civil society, thus reducing the likelihood of negative criticism. The corporation can therefore avoid the challenges and difficulties associated with a damaged corporate image. By decreasing the chances for such issues to affect the corporate image, the corporation will thereby safeguard reputation and revenue while avoiding significant costs.

Corporate Brand Values

Engagement in corporate activities which support the principles of Cultural Diplomacy at both national and international levels will demonstrate the openness, interest, and dedication of the corporation towards the global community and its diversity. This will attract positive reactions from cultures which the corporation is engaging with.

Position Corporate Image as an Innovator

In the increasingly interdependent world, relations between cultures will be of paramount importance and the new field of cultural diplomacy is therefore steadily growing in significance. As the activity of cultural diplomacy is inherently positive and constructive in nature, corporations who engage in corporate cultural diplomacy will demonstrate innovative and modern attitudes by aligning themselves with the field.

Benefits for Corporations

To Engage in Corporate Cultural Diplomacy Activities

B. Contribution to Corporate Advertising & Brand Awareness

Corporate Cultural Diplomacy can serve as an excellent support to both classical and existing advertising campaigns in a very cost-effective manner and a high return on investment. This can be accomplished by both direct and indirect public relations support, by increasing the efficiency of the advertising budget of the corporation and increasing the media exposure of the company. One of the main advantages is that with a modest investment in a relatively small program targeted at one group within a culture, the corporation can gain the awareness and support of the cultural group as a whole. In addition, as corporate cultural diplomacy projects usually engage large networks, the potential for enhanced public relations is both significant and sustainable. Below is a selection of examples.

Direct & Indirect Public Relations Support

The engagement of the corporation will be recognized at the local, national, and international levels through the direct involvement of the many participants and partners as well as through the indirect advertising that will follow the programs (through the media and word-of-mouth communications that will result). All of the participants and partners directly involved in the project have the potential to become free “ambassadors” for the corporation and thus promote a positive corporate image to others.

Increased Efficiency of Advertising Budget

Corporate Cultural Diplomacy is far more cost effective than traditional commercial advertising or other advertising alternatives in terms of creditability and return on investment. The exposure to the corporation through engagement in corporate cultural diplomacy programs is not only cost efficient, having a far greater return on investment and impact than paid advertising (as it is often comparatively inexpensive), but it also benefits society at the same time (in contrast to an advertising company) through investing in projects which actually create positive change in society, both locally and globally.

Corporate exposure in a respectable and sustainable manner through cultural diplomacy activities can complement a classical advertising campaign in order to increase the overall impact of the campaign.

Media Exposure

In addition, as soon as high-level governmental officials and institutions are involved in the project the degree of free increased media coverage is likely to be enhanced.



Benefits for Corporations

To Engage in Corporate Cultural Diplomacy Activities

C. Developing Partnerships and Acquiring New Strategic Partners

Corporate Cultural Diplomacy projects are conducted in partnership with an interdisciplinary mixture of partners and organizations operating in different fields. By aligning with these partners the corporation can create connections for additional business opportunities in the future. Below is a selection of examples.



Governments & Parliamentarians Governments & Parliamentarians

Corporate Cultural Diplomacy projects by nature are typically cooperating with local, national and global governmental institutions. The corporations engaged in these projects will therefore strengthen their relationship with participating governments and gain additional levels of governmental support as a result, as an additional benefit of the project.

Interdisciplinary Partners from Different Fields

Corporate Cultural Diplomacy projects usually include an inter-disciplinary mixture of partners from different fields, including: NGOs, universities, media organizations, cultural institutions, orchestras, museums and more. This diverse mixture of partners can prove useful to the corporations for other purposes in the future as well.

Youth & Young Professionals

Corporate Cultural Diplomacy projects that focus on youth can include developments dedicated to the initiation, promotion and execution of education and development programs for the youth. There can be a high return on investment for the corporation when corporate cultural diplomacy projects provide the younger generation with greater access to personal achievement, while increasing their chances for professional opportunities. The investment in young leaders can provide valuable multipliers for the corporation as well as bring immediately and in the future new business opportunities.

Benefits for Corporations

To Engage in Corporate Cultural Diplomacy Activities

D. Contribution to Corporate Business Performance

Corporations can improve their business performance at both the local and the global level through engagement in corporate cultural diplomacy activities. Below is a selection of examples.

Acquire New Business Opportunities

A Corporate Cultural Diplomacy project can serve as an excellent vehicle to support the communities in which firms operate as well as to strengthen the relationships between the firm and these communities and clients. Improved communication channels and strengthened relationships can then lead to innovative business opportunities and ideas that emerge as a result of both these relationships and the interaction with the wider community. Additionally, by partnering with governmental organizations, the basis can be created for additional business partnerships and opportunities between these actors in the future.

Improve Business Efficiency in the Local Community

By initiating programs that actively involve communities, the corporation will bring together a wide variety of interdisciplinary partners from the local, national and global levels and will encourage increased communication between the diverse group of participants and partners. The increased communication between the partners has beneficial repercussions for the corporation itself as it will benefit from increased credibility and legitimacy in these communities making it easier and more efficient to conduct business there.

Access to News and Information

A corporation that is engaged in corporate cultural diplomacy in a certain local area or region has the opportunity to be the first to know about relevant developments and new business opportunities through regular engagement and interaction with local stakeholders from different fields. Access to such valuable information and news can lead to new business opportunities and information which in turn can assist in improving or adapting products, services and marketing strategies to therefore increase business profit and decrease costs by, for example, making sure on a regular basis that the products, services, and marketing strategies are still relevant to the local markets the corporation is working in.





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