Planning and Managing a Corporate Social Responsibility Event

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Introduction

Corporate social responsibility is an important management concept. The companies following this philosophy implement strategies that are focused on integrating social and environmental concerns while executing their different business activities and interacting with the relevant stakeholders. Sometimes, it is also referred to as achieving the balance in economic, environmental and social initiatives, often known as the triple bottom line approach, while addressing the specific needs and expectations of stakeholders and shareholders. Once a company has achieved this balance by incorporating CSR-related policies, it can earn tremendous growth and success in the market as a reputed organization working to reduce environmental impacts. This also helps organizations to attract top talent from the market and inspire innovation (International Organization for Standardization, 2010).

However, without an effective CSR policy in place, the company can be badly affected because consumers value them very highly when comparing two different companies for the same product or service. The obvious result of this will be the contracting customer base and decreasing customer satisfaction with the company's specific product or service. This may also impact the employees within the organization, who can keep losing their motivation to achieve high growth for themselves and the company. To counter all this, organizing CSR events not only helps to train the employees but also establishes itself as a socially concerned leader in the market. In this regard, the following report outlines the basic planning for the organization of a CSR event in light of different problems in the company's structure and operations to devise effective activities in the event accordingly. Moreover, various planning and implementing strategies, along with the cost analysis of different event activities, are presented to guide the overall effective implementation of the CSR event.

Contemporary Issues And Performance Goals

The data collected from different surveys, customer support chats and complaint tickets have shown that the company is facing the following issues with regard to its growth and service delivery:

- Customer complaints have increased by 25% in the last 12 months.
- Customer complaints are mostly related to poor initial services, poor follow-ups, and wrong orders sent out.
- The staff is not enough; they are overloaded, untrained, and have no support.

- The company is losing customers while it is spending a lot of money on sending gifts and credits to make them happy.
- The staff turnover is very high because they are not happy and have very low morale.

It can be further assessed that these issues are mostly related to human resource management and corporate workplace culture. Thus, the different strategies and policies to overcome these issues will mostly be oriented around training the employees and enabling them to perform their jobs more effectively and efficiently. Therefore, the CSR event plan devised below will be intended to achieve the following goals.

1. To improve the relationship between staff and customers
2. To reduce customer complaints by 25%
3. To stabilize the CSR department

Event Plan

Planning a CSR event requires the correct understanding of the issues which are aimed to be resolved, designing the different activities to engage the reps, inviting the most relevant and expert trainers and guests to share their insights and development techniques and outlining the different expenses and the expected revenues. In this regard, the following sections will discuss all of these aspects one by one (International Organization for Standardization, 2024).

The Role Of Managers

It is the primary responsibility of the managers to observe all the business operations very carefully and then underline the issues if there are any. In this case, the possible issues are also highlighted by the respective managers of the HR department and the owner of the company itself, who observed the various issues of customer dissatisfaction and low morale of the employees. Therefore, it is their primary responsibility to execute a complete training program for the sales representatives to achieve stable growth, decrease customer complaints, and decrease the employee turnover rate. It is also important for them to observe the same procedures by themselves because managers are often perceived as leaders by employees who tend to follow and copy them.

Thus, fulfilling their primary responsibility, the manager will make a team of members from their respective departments to execute the different activities of the event. This team will be further divided into different groups that will manage the specific tasks such as sending the invitation to guests, arranging transport for them, arranging different facilities at the event venue, inviting sales representatives from the clients, etc.

Training Seminars

The training itself is very important for the sales representatives to engage the potential customers according to the particular mission and goals of the company. No doubt, this requires a great investment of resources and time, but once the reps have acquired the relevant skillset, they can also generate revenue at a relatively higher rate. So, the event will be based on different training sessions conducted by expert trainers and professionals.

Breakout Sessions

Breakout sessions are very effective in investigating the different issues at different stages of the business process. Therefore, the event will have different breakout sessions with reps from client companies to highlight these issues and then analyze the most efficient countermeasures. In this regard, the sessions can be based on discussing the sales process, CRM data entry, strategies used to onboard a new customer, etc. Further, this discussion can be categorized into the following three different aspects.

Sales

The section will be related to sales methodology, pre-call planning, objection handling, target customer profile, psychology of sales, etc.

Product

This section is related to the origin story of the product, the target market, the key business cases and the competitor landscape.

Process

The final section reviews all the details of the sales process, without which success cannot be achieved. When employees are properly trained, they all give the same answer about how the sales are executed in the company. Thus, this section is more about standardization.

All these three sections will be discussed in detail in the breakout sessions to underline the specific problems in each section and devise the solutions and their implementation strategies. Regarding their time slot, they will be placed between different seminars so that reps can use the important points highlighted by the trainers and guests in their discussions.

Trainers And Guests

In any training event, there are generally two types of trainers, internal trainers and external trainers. The internal trainers involve the highly experienced personnel from the top management of the company, while external trainers are field specialists from other companies or platforms and are not directly involved in the company. However, they both have their advantages and disadvantages with respect to training the employees effectively. One particular factor that differentiates external trainers from internal ones is that they can help innovate the business processes by providing their out-of-the-box solutions because with internal trainers, the most common issue faced is groupthink. But they are expensive as well because they often charge per day and depending upon their training experience. Also, there are other expenses involved, such as transportation, food and accommodation, etc. Moreover, they can also affect the time schedule of the event because of their other commitments.

However, considering their overall influence on the training sessions, the event will include both external and internal trainers who will share their respective views, insights, and business development strategies. However, as mentioned earlier, it is the responsibility of the organizers to facilitate the trainers in every possible way and communicate clearly the different objectives of the seminars. This may include preparing the relevant training materials such as presentations, handouts, and different resources for training activities. This also includes the different onsite facilities such as Wi-Fi presentation equipment, ceiling-mounted projectors, and break-out rooms.

Food And Transportation

In order to facilitate the organizers from the company, such a venue will be decided that also offers food and accommodation so that they can work on other aspects of the event. If such a venue is not available, then it will be ensured that the accommodation place for the guests is very near to the event place to reduce the accommodation expenses. The venue should also be in the center of the residing places of different trainers so that the cost of receiving them can also be minimized. Sometimes, it is also better to choose a venue near airports if most of the guests are coming from outside the cities. This will further help the organizers to efficiently manage them.

However, it is preferable to choose a venue where all services, food, accommodation and transportation take place to make the event cost-effective. This will improve the coordination between organizers and help them conclude the event effectively. Once the event is successfully executed, the owner of the venue, while fulfilling his agreed responsibilities, will make arrangements for the cleanup.

Total Expenses

The total expenses of the event depend on the number of participants, the venue and its location, staffing time, trainer's fee, travelling cost and other contingencies. However, it is important to note that any ongoing training of employees also takes about 2-5 % of salary. So, organizing an event can reduce this ongoing cost. For our convenience, we can divide the overall expenses into the following four categories.

1. Planning cost: This cost is associated with the planning phase of the event, when organizers will spend their time and energy finalizing all the details of the event.
2. Design and development cost: This cost relates to the purchase of different supplies and services for the execution of the event.
3. Delivery cost: This cost includes all the expenses related to the delivery of the training, such as the instructor's fees, transportation, accommodation expenses, refreshments, etc.
4. Evaluation cost: This is related to the cost of evaluating the training done by any external evaluator. If the staff does the evaluation itself, then there is still the cost associated with their relevant training.

However, the benefits of the event are a lot greater than these expenses because after the event, the sales are likely to increase and employee turnover to decrease, which can add to the overall profit for the company. The cost of losing a single employee with an average salary is around $60,000, which can be saved if he becomes satisfied with his job.

Future Directions

The single event is not enough to ensure the continuous growth of the company, instead, the company needs to implement formal strategies for internal morale-building and tracking their success. In this regard, the company can work on its culture to formulate clear goals and missions and then make its employees align theirs with them. This will keep them motivated to achieve common goals and prosper together. Focusing more on CSR practices can also help its employees achieve a sense of purpose and identity and improve their satisfaction level at the company. Thus, building a strong CSR culture can help the company to improve the performance of its employees as well. They will be more motivated and enthusiastic to bring creative solutions to the company and increase its overall productivity. To keep them motivated, the company can also initiate different reward programs where the good employees working excellently are provided with a certificate of excellence. This will encourage others as well to perform even better.

Incorporating the feedback of employees every time a new policy is implemented is also important because it helps the company evaluate its policies and training programs. The same case applies to CSR events. To evaluate its success, it can collect feedback from different participants and can initiate more training programs accordingly. The other indicators of success are the evaluation of the

employees' performance, the decrease or increase in customer complaints, and the decrease or increase in the employees' retention rate. The company can also choose to take a test from employees regarding the training information if deemed necessary (Kirkpatrick Partners, n.d.).

Conclusion

The corporate social responsibility event can bring a lot of benefits to the company in terms of more customer and employee satisfaction and an improved competitive position of the company in the market. It is also a strong recruitment and retention tool. The employees will be able to interact with many industry experts and representatives from clients' companies to develop insights about the business processes and operations to perform them more effectively. However, it is important to track the success of the event to ensure that the revenues are higher than the total expenses spent on organizing the event.

References

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