



BSR/Cone 2008 Corporate Responsibility in a New World Survey

Fact Sheet

BSR and Cone conducted a survey of corporate responsibility (CR) professionals to gauge their attitudes and expectations on issues related to responsible leadership amid the historic U.S. presidential election and the current global economic turmoil.

LEADERSHIP REQUIRED: THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT

Nearly 9 in 10 respondents feel President-Elect Obama will help advance the CR agenda:

The U.S. president elect will have a positive impact on advancing the corporate responsibility agenda.	86%
The U.S. president elect will have a neutral impact on advancing the corporate responsibility agenda.	12%
The U.S. president elect will have a negative impact on advancing the corporate responsibility agenda.	2%

The most important leadership role the president elect should play to advance the CR agenda around the world includes:

Promote major investments in renewable energy and carbon capture and storage technologies.	67%
Take measureable steps toward progress on effective, efficient, and fair global climate change mitigation strategies.	53%
Initiate cross-sector collaboration among business, government, and civil society.	42%
Implement/increase regulation of corporate responsibility-related issues to hold business accountable for its impact.	31%
Integrate labor and environmental standards into new bilateral and multilateral trade agreements.	29%
Promote international standards on key corporate responsibility issues.	28%
Institute corporate governance reforms requiring board oversight of corporate responsibility issues.	24%

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS AND POTENTIAL REGULATION

More than two-thirds of respondents believe corporate responsibility would have lessened, or even prevented, the current economic crisis:

The current economic turmoil would not have been as severe if businesses had had more effective corporate responsibility programs and practices.	63%
The current economic turmoil would have been the same if businesses had had more effective corporate responsibility programs and practices.	30%
The current economic turmoil would have been avoided entirely if businesses had had more effective corporate responsibility programs and practices.	6%

By an overwhelming majority, respondents expect increased government regulation of corporate responsibility-related issues:

Expect increased regulation.	94%
Do not expect increased regulation.	6%

And they expect regulation in the following areas:

Climate change	86%
Corporate governance and financial transparency	83%
Sourcing practices (such as labor conditions and environmental performance)	37%
Green marketing and sustainability advertising claims	26%

GREAT OPTIMISM AMID GROWING DEMANDS

Seventy-two percent of respondents agree there will be more demands on business to solve societal problems. More than half (of this group) is confident business will meet these demands:

There will be more demands on business to solve societal problems and business <i>will</i> meet these demands.	44%
There will be more demands on business to solve societal problems and business <i>will not</i> meet these demands.	28%
The demands will be the same.	18%
There will be fewer demands on business to solve societal problems.	10%

Leaders are optimistic that global businesses will embrace corporate responsibility as part of their core strategies and operations in the next five years:

Somewhat optimistic	66%
Somewhat pessimistic	12%
Neither pessimistic nor optimistic	11%
Very optimistic	11%
Very pessimistic	1%

However, the current economic crisis may affect the budget for future CR initiatives:

Budget will not decrease.	43%
Budget will decrease.	31%
Too early to determine.	26%

What is driving CR today?

Reputational benefits are increasingly important.	84%
Stakeholder demands are increasing.	80%
There is increased pressure to show a return on investment.	76%
Long-term cost savings or efficiencies are major drivers.	75%
Our corporate responsibility initiatives are driven more by company values and mission than by bottom-line impacts or other factors.	59%
Corporate responsibility is increasingly seen as a driver of innovation.	57%
Corporate responsibility initiatives are less of a priority today.	12%

Leading ways in which business should work to advance the CR agenda around the world:

Strengthen alignment between corporate responsibility and business strategy.	70%
Take measureable steps to make progress on key corporate responsibility issues (e.g. manage water use, ensure human rights throughout supply chain, reduce carbon footprint, etc.).	64%

Develop sustainable products and services.	41%
Collaborate on solutions within and across industries and sectors.	38%
Strengthen governance and transparency at board and executive levels.	31%
More thoroughly measure and report on social and environmental impacts.	24%
Advocate on behalf of corporate responsibility issues to government.	11%

Emerging economies most likely to influence the evolution of CR in the next five years:

China	76%
Brazil	11%
India	9%
South Africa	3%
Russia	2%
Other	1%

About the Research:

The BSR/Cone 2008 Corporate Responsibility in a New World Survey was conducted November 5, 2008, among a sample of corporate responsibility professionals attending the Business for Social Responsibility annual conference. The sample population is comprised of 424 representatives from business, NGOs, government, and academia, representing 28 countries.

About BSR: A leader in corporate responsibility since 1992, Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) works with its global network of more than 250 member companies to develop sustainable business strategies and solutions through consulting, research, and cross-sector collaboration. With six offices in Asia, Europe, and North America, BSR leverages its expertise in environment, human rights, economic development, and transparency and accountability to guide global companies toward creating a just and sustainable world. Visit www.bsr.org for more information.

About Cone:

Cone LLC (www.coneinc.com) is a strategy and communications agency committed to building brand trust. Cone creates stakeholder loyalty and long-term relationships through the development and execution of Cause Branding, Corporate Responsibility, Brand Marketing and Crisis Prevention and Management initiatives. Cone is a part of the Omnicom Group (NYSE: OMC) (www.omnicomgroup.com). Omnicom is a leading global advertising, marketing and corporate communications company.