Chapter 24
Sustainable Programs:
Innovative Internet-Based Learning with Global Partnership

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ABSTRACT

According to the study of Louw (2013, p. 56), UNESCO calls for educational sustainable development in the coming 10 years with the four main goals identified in relation to education, that is, rethinking and revising education from nursery school to university to include a clear focus of current and future societies on the development of knowledge, skills, perspectives and values related to sustainability. In order to fulfill the needs of UNESCO and increase the employability of learners, this chapter focuses on demonstrating the way to link the delivery of a module in an undergraduate programme to develop learners' interest in internet learning with global partnership for developing higher order thinking skills, e.g. problem-solving and solution-seeking skills, and to raise educators' awareness of generating new business via internet-learning.

INTRODUCTION

Based on information retrieved from WiseNews (2008-2010), there are about 210,000 children aged around 14 and up from poor families in Hong Kong. These families cannot afford children's schooling, including basic study support, tutorial fees and extra-curricular activities. Without proper support in schooling and learning, these children are found lack of self-esteem, self-confidence, feeling useless, and feeling no way to control emotion.

Besides, global unemployment has become a hot issue, especially young people at the age of 15 and up that their unemployment rate will be increased to 12.8% in 2018, it is recommended to upgrade the skill sets of senior secondary school students and university students of entry level with higher-order thinking skills and via exposure with industry practitioners to develop their entrepreneurial competencies, including creativity, innovation and problem-solving skills to close the gap of skill mismatch mentioned by prospective employers.

1. Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

According to the definition of Brundtland Commission (1992) of the United Nations, "sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." The basic element of sustainability is the economic aspect to support the business in short term. For business survival and expansion, issues relating to the customers, suppliers, organizations, and the community must be considered in strategic planning, strategy implementation, process review and performance measurement. Environmental considerations in the core and supporting processes also contribute to sustainable business.

Besides linking business with sustainability, strategy with performance, the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) guidelines of ISO 26000 also highlight the seven dimensions in operating business for building a social responsible organization. The seven dimensions are: labor practices, consumer issues, fair operating practice, human rights, organizational governance, community involvement and development and the environment. The priority of the seven dimensions is subject to the strategic planning of the management and the expectations of their stakeholders. For example, the management of a banking organization may need to understand the expectations of their customers when designing and launching different kinds of financial products and services, may need to identify their responsibility and that of their business partners in the supply chain, may need to think about the environmental issues affecting their operations, their customers and their suppliers, and may need to consider ethical issues in their decision-making process so as to balance the economic, social and environmental impacts of sustainability; and the seven dimensions of CSR. The ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility (WG SR) has a high level of consensus in considering the needs of stakeholders in the guidelines of ISO 26000 for the benefit of the community.

The decision to move to the CD stage is not only a milestone in the process of developing ISO 26000. It is also living evidence that the multi-stakeholder approach adopted by ISO for this task is an effective tool for dealing with complex subjects in large and highly diversified groups. (Cajazeira, 2008)

According to Cajazeira (2008), the major principles for ISO 26000 are: accountability, transparency, ethical behavior, stakeholder consideration, legality, international standards, and human rights. It is the responsibility of organizations to consider the needs of the stakeholders in these seven aspects when designing work processes and executing business-related activities. In fact, ISO 26000 guidelines convey a message that non-economic inputs and intangible outcomes are the trend of quality management system (QMS).

This chapter explores the ways of integrating the programme accreditation-related requirements of accreditation body, the mission statement of the case institution and the use of internet-learning with overseas academic partners for the module of CSR in an undergraduate programme of supply chain management in Hong Kong for helping students develop their higher-order thinking skills.

2. Sustainable Organization: Stakeholder and Alignment

The phrases of sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR) have been used interchangeably in the past few years. Organizations of different nature are seeking to report not only their financial performance but also social performance for trust gaining and brand building. Demand for social reporting

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