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Elements in Business Strategy
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J.-C. Spender
Rutgers Business School

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Christopher Wickert
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU), The Netherlands
David Risi
University of St. Gallen, Switzerland



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Christopher Wickert
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

David Risi
University of St. Gallen

Author for correspondence: Christopher Wickert, christopher.wickert@vu.nl

Abstract: This Element offers a thought-provoking and critical examination of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR has entered the boardroom and become a mainstream management concept for businesses to address their ethical, social and environmental responsibilities towards society. CSR does not come without contestation, and firms engage in CSR for different reasons and exhibit different patterns of CSR activities. These activities range from sincere action with substantial social or environmental improvements to symbolic impression management and the creation of a CSR facade that is little more than empty words. This Element illuminates and scrutinizes contemporary approaches to CSR and offers a fresh perspective for scholars, managers and decision-makers interested in the societal role of business firms beyond maximizing profitability. Christopher Wickert and David Risi take a step back from how CSR is currently understood and practised, and encourage readers to reflect on how to move CSR forward towards a more inclusive concept.

Keywords: Business Ethics; Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR); Corporate Social Irresponsibility (CSI); Digitalization; Implementation; Globalization; Greenwashing; Social Connection; Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); United Nations Global Compact

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Contents

Introduction	1
1 What is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)? Scope, Issues and Definitional Clarity	2
2 Why Would Business Firms Engage in CSR? Motives and Drivers Beyond the Business Case	24
3 How to Implement Corporate Social Responsibility? Practices, Procedures and the Role of Internal Change Agents	43
4 The Dark Side of CSR: Greenwashing and Other Forms of Corporate Social Irresponsibility (CSiR)	61
5 Looking Ahead: Setting the CSR Agenda for the Next Decade	72
References	81