

Rotterdam School of Management  
Erasmus University

# MASTERCLASS CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

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# Corporate Responsibility at a glance

Corporations are increasingly held accountable for their effect on both the environment and society. The demand for more corporate responsibility (CR) has increased because of the unprecedented challenges of the 21st century, such as climate change, demographic change, scarcity of resources, and pandemics in addition to social issues such as human rights violations, racism and income inequality.

Corporations are not only expected to contribute to solving these problems for society, but also for their own sake – to stay competitive. This masterclass focuses on the corporation's responsibility to its key constituencies such as customers, employees, shareholders, communities, and the environment, in all parts of their operations. This concept extends beyond obligations to comply with regulations alone, and finds companies taking further steps voluntarily to 'do well by doing good'.

In this course, we will study the interplay between business and society, and explore how companies can meet stakeholder expectations in a manner that balances social, environmental and economic goals. The multi-industry case study structure of this masterclass helps you gain insights and hands you tools to confront the complex challenges in various industries while developing and communicating CR initiatives.



# Learning objectives

You will gain insights into why corporate responsibility is still so relevant and why companies cannot survive without a proper CR strategy; how to practise it well in these changing times; and how to incorporate it in your communication strategy to stay competitive.

## Learning objectives

The learning objectives for this course are as follows:

1. Understand corporate responsibility (CR) and its role in enhancing reputation and value in the global business environment.
2. Assess a corporation's responsibilities to various stakeholders.
3. Acquire essential tools and frameworks related to CR for success as a corporate communication executive.
4. Explore best practices and future trends for integrating CR in global corporations.
5. Define your personal responsibility as a leader.



# Your learning experience

This masterclass creates an environment based on experiential (casebased) learning, which will help you to assimilate new knowledge. You will be asked to study a number of thought-provoking real-life cases in advance.

During the masterclass you will work through these cases while being encouraged to think deeply about them by your teacher. Your own thinking and your suggested solutions to the problem are welcomed and encouraged. Underlying theories, frameworks and Your learning experience and learning objectives 4 5 pitfalls will be explained and discussed thoroughly. Your teacher, Professor Paul Argenti, is well known, and has been praised for teaching method, in which participants are challenged to think out of their comfort zones.

You will learn how to make difficult choices, promote responsible behaviour within your organisation, communicate effectively about corporate responsibility, and understand the role that personal values play in developing responsible corporate behaviour for both the organisations you work for and for yourself. You will learn through cases focusing on the social, reputational, and environmental consequences of corporate activities.

The course comprises:

- **Lectures** that provide the basic theoretical frameworks to approach every topic, accompanied by additional reading to further develop your understanding of each course topic.
- **Case studies and team presentations** to help you discuss each topic in depth so you can better understand how to practice the theoretical concepts.
- **In-class discussions** which encourage you to become actively engaged and share your experiences with other participants.

## Certification and ECTS

At the course's conclusion, there is a compulsory individual assignment. Participants apply theoretical and practical ideas to an organisation of their choice, preparing a written report on improvements, reasons, and implementation using taught frameworks. Assignment details will be explained in the final session.

Participants receive a certificate of participation upon course completion. This masterclass is worth 5 ECTS, granted upon successful completion of the assignment as part of the RSM Part-time Executive MSc in Corporate Communication.

# Why corporate responsibility?

Taking corporate responsibility means that your business takes an interest in wider environmental and social issues, rather than just the issues that affect profit margins. Corporate responsibility is growing in importance because of increased globalization and complexity, as well as how easy it is to access information because of technological advances.

Customers like to be associated with companies that act responsibly, and make their choices accordingly. Responsible behaviour also attracts potential talent for employment – but also empowers employees to leverage corporate resources to do ‘good’.

Corporate responsibility (CR) therefore cultivates brand recognition and is an important tool to enhance the company’s reputation. It also creates ‘competitive immunity’ and makes your business more sustainable in the long term.

Companies have a responsibility and the ability to positively impact global issues that need attention. Put simply, companies cannot thrive in collapsing societies. CR is therefore their ‘licence to operate’.

All companies should now clearly define the role of CR in their businesses, and move on to the third-generation understanding of CR: when corporate responsibility is integrated into a company’s strategy and culture, and based firmly on the idea of doing good to do well.

## **For Whom?**

This course is designed to give a better understanding of contemporary CR and how to practise it well to stay competitive to: senior communication managers; CR and CSR managers; brand managers; public policy advisors; and to general managers who are motivated to learn about the topic.

In our classroom you will meet a diverse group of accomplished, driven and open-minded professionals from Europe and beyond, working in various communication positions in the public and private sectors, in NGOs, and in consultancies. Participants should be educated to bachelor level with at least three years of work experience.







# Programme overview

## Lecture day 1

- Introduction and course overview
- An overview of corporate responsibility
- What is a business for?
- Case 'Starbucks'
- Introducing key frameworks of corporate responsibility

## Lecture day 2

- Presentations & Workshop: navigating sustainability in a changing world
- Professional's responsibility to ethical decisions
- Corporate Responsibility to defend human rights.

## Lecture day 3

- Case 'Shell'
- Group discussion
- Leadership and personal responsibility
- Wrap up and exam explanation





# Course experts

## Professor Paul Argenti – Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth College, USA

This masterclass is coordinated and taught by Professor Paul Argenti, who has taught management, corporate responsibility, corporate communication, and healthcare management since 1977. His tenure includes Harvard Business School, Columbia Business School, and Dartmouth's Tuck School of Business. He has also been a visiting professor at several international universities. Currently, he is the Faculty Director for Tuck's Leadership and Strategic Impact Programme. Professor Argenti is also the lead lecturer for 'Crisis Communication' and 'Leadership and Communication' in the MCC programme.

Argenti's textbook, *Corporate Communication* (8th Edition), was published in 2023. He also authored *Corporate Responsibility* (2016) and co-authored *Digital Strategies for Powerful Corporate Communication* (2009). Other notable works include *Strategic Corporate Communication* and *The Power of Corporate Communication*. He has written for *Harvard Business Review*, *California Management Review*, and *Sloan Management Review*.

A Fulbright Scholar and Pathfinder Award winner, Argenti has been listed as one of the most influential people in Business Ethics. He has served on advisory boards for the World Bank and various CEOs globally. He has consulted for companies like General Electric, The Detroit Lions, Mitsui, Novartis, and Goldman Sachs.

You can follow Professor Argenti on LinkedIn.

## Sonia Ruiz – CEO NOIMA, Spain

Sonia empowers change-makers to build sustainable, inclusive, and resilient organizations. With 20 years of experience in international project management, business development, and sustainability strategy, she has worked in corporate and non-profit sectors. Before founding NOIMA, she held managerial roles at the Spanish Embassy's Commercial Office, leading B2B firms, the Athens Olympic Games, and Greenpeace. Currently, she collaborates academically with the Institute of Social Innovation at ESADE Business School.

# Practical information

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Explore the latest updates on dates, fees, and locations by visiting our website at [rsm.nl/mcc](https://rsm.nl/mcc). Take advantage of the convenience of our frequently offered live online courses.

If you have any questions or need more information, we're here to help. Feel free to reach out to us at [ccc@rsm.nl](mailto:ccc@rsm.nl) or call us at +31 (0) 10 408 2851.

Ready to take the next step?  
Secure your spot by completing our online [application form](#).

We look forward to welcoming you to our programme!

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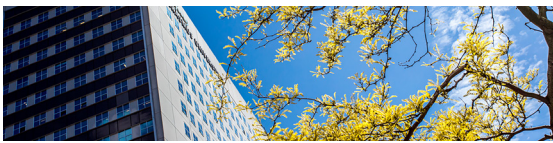
# About our Part-time Executive Master in Corporate Communication programme

This course can be followed on its own, or as a part of our **Part-time Executive MSc in Corporate Communication**.

We have offered this master programme since 1998, to communication professionals who wish to further enhance their careers. The aim is to provide strategic, leadership and management skills, as well as in-depth knowledge of corporate communication, reputation management and related disciplines. Participants who complete the whole programme are rewarded with a master degree from Erasmus University Rotterdam.

Our accredited programme is designed to be flexible, and can be combined with a full-time career. You can therefore start at any time, with any of our four modules:

**Part I**  
**Foundation of corporate communication**  
Foundation course (in January or June)



**Part II Six advanced elective courses**  
Six advanced elective courses. You can choose six courses from the 15 that are offered, depending on your personal or professional interest and availability



**Part III**  
**Study trip**  
International study trip



**Part IV**  
**Master thesis**  
Master thesis.



To obtain the master degree you must complete all four modules. Upon completion, you will have gained insight from new academic, international perspectives, and learned from working with international peers from diverse industry backgrounds within Europe and beyond.

[www.rsm.nl/mcc](http://www.rsm.nl/mcc)

Accredited by



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**Rotterdam School of Management Erasmus University (RSM)**

is one of Europe's top-ranked business schools. RSM provides ground-breaking research and education furthering excellence in all aspects of management and is based in the international port city of Rotterdam – a vital nexus of business, logistics and trade. RSM's primary focus is on developing business leaders with international careers who can become a force for positive change by carrying their innovative mindset into a sustainable future. Our first-class range of bachelor, master, MBA, PhD and executive programmes encourage them to become critical, creative, caring and collaborative thinkers and doers.