

For immediate release

Active employee involvement and training still has no central role in the sustainable development reports of the CAC 40

Paris, February 11, 2009 – Novethic publishes the results of the second study on the significance placed on employee training in the sustainable development reports of the CAC 40. The study was conducted in partnership with the French consulting agency, Des Enjeux et Des Hommes. The main observation drawn from the study is that, for a vast majority of these companies, active employee involvement and training are not always presented as strategic elements in the deployment of their sustainable development policies.

Communication on sustainable development still plays a secondary role

The CAC 40 companies do not prioritise active employee involvement and training in sustainable development when it comes to their 2007 sustainable development reports. This crucial element in the deployment of a policy impacting business strategy is scarcely even mentioned. Only 19 out of 40 companies provided figures on this topic; however, they were rarely accompanied by tracking and performance indicators. Des Enjeux et Des Hommes and Novethic reviewed the 2007 sustainable development reports and observed a slight improvement in corporate reporting in comparison to the first study. Companies are better distinguishing between awareness-raising and training. On the other hand, this improvement is far from consistent across the board: while half of the companies clearly progressed, the other half showed no continuity in the quality of their reporting.

Companies implement a series of targeted initiatives rather than a global approach

One-fourth of the companies only mention the need to help employees understand the overall strategic environmental and social stakes and challenges facing their sector. The majority prefer to emphasise one or more specific aspects of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). For example, 30 companies cite governance issues and describe their training programmes in ethics and anti-corruption. Almost the same number (27) highlights their diversity programmes. However, only 6 refer to the environmentally friendly design of their products and services, and yet this is a key factor in the implementation of an environmental strategy.

Focus on environmentally friendly initiatives

2007 sustainable development reports place a major emphasis on programmes encouraging environmentally friendly initiatives within companies. Almost half of the companies under review stressed these types of actions. Reducing water consumption, electricity and paper use seem to be considered a means of raising employee awareness. However, companies have yet to explain how such concerns for the environment will apply to their businesses, or even transform them.

Click here to read the study:

http://www.novethic.com/novethic/v3_uk/upload/CAC40_Study.pdf

About Novethic

As the sole source of analytical and statistical information on the French SRI market, Novethic is the leading research center in France on Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Created in 2001 as a subsidiary of Caisse des Dépôts, Novethic produces research studies and organises events to mobilise business leaders, investors and NGOs on these key issues related to CSR and SRI.

Contact: Célia Juère – +33 1 58 50 98 23 – celia.juere@novethic.fr