

Responsible Action Helps Companies in the “War for Talents”

Nils Kruse (FHWien der WKW) received the Pater Schasching Prize for his dissertation on the question to what extent socially committed companies are more attractive employers.

Vienna, November 17, 2022 – Socially and ecologically sustainable actions strengthen companies in the competition for skilled workers and talents – if they are authentic. This is the conclusion of business ethicist Nils Kruse in his dissertation, for which the head of the Institute for Business Ethics and Sustainable Strategy (IBES) at FHWien der WKW received the Pater Johannes Schasching SJ Prize on November 10, 2022. This award for promoting dialogue between business, ethics and religion is presented by the Federation of Austrian Industry (IV) in cooperation with the Catholic Private University Linz (KU) and the Forum of Christian Managers (FCF) in Linz. In his dissertation, Nils Kruse investigates how sustainability measures influence the attractiveness of companies from the perspective of applicants and employees.

Sustainable action also provides economic benefits for companies

In its statement of reasons, the awarding committee attests Nils Kruse's dissertation an “excellent scientific quality” and says it tackles a topic “that is of great relevance within business ethics (...) The global competition for the best talents has intensified and employees are more value-oriented and sensitive with regard to authentic communication.”

The award-winning dissertation is entitled “How Does Corporate Social Performance Affect (Prospective) Employees? An Experimental Investigation”. The researcher's starting point is the observation that the “war for talents” plays a crucial role in corporate success. This is shown by discussions about the purpose of companies, criticism of the capitalist system and concerns about the global climate. Simultaneously, job seekers are attaching more and more importance to sustainability aspects. In this context, Nils Kruse develops decision-making tools that companies can use to determine whether and when assuming social responsibility pays off from an economic perspective.

Potentials and limitations of the business case for corporate social responsibility (CSR)

Nils Kruse shows how companies can combine economic success with social responsibility. He addresses several research gaps in three studies, which he summarizes in his dissertation: An experimental study in South Korea adds a global perspective to the discussion. Thus, a contribution to more geographic diversity is made – as a complement to the predominantly “westernized” empirical surveys. By focusing on “hypocritical CSR communication”, possible negative aspects of corporate social responsibility are brought into focus.

In his dissertation, Nils Kruse concludes that the details of CSR implementation are crucial. Only well-implemented diversity measures, authentically communicated transformation and sustainable initiatives pay off for companies. Correspondingly, greenwashing can have a detrimental effect in the “war for talents”.

Nils Kruse as part of the new IBES management team at FHWien der WKW

Nils Kruse graduated in business administration and business ethics and has many years of international experience in Asia as well as practical experience in the field of management consulting. Together with Daniela Ortiz, he has been heading the IBES research institute at FHWien der WKW

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since the beginning of October 2022. A native of Germany, he studied at the Konstanz University of Applied Sciences in Germany, the Beijing Language and Culture University in China, the Korea University in Seoul and the American University in Washington, D.C. He received his doctorate from the Martin Luther University in Halle-Wittenberg. Nils Kruse's research focuses on corporate responsibility and business ethics, such as corporate political responsibility and responsible lobbying. In addition to his work as a senior researcher, he is also the contact person for corporate partnerships in his new role as Head of IBES.

About the Institute for Business Ethics and Sustainable Strategy (IBES) at FHWien der WKW

The IBES at FHWien der WKW is an internationally renowned research center in the fields of business ethics and strategy. Pressing issues of ecologically, economically and socially sustainable corporate management are examined in the context of topics such as globalization, climate change and digitalization.

A particular focus is on the areas of business ethics, corporate governance and sustainability management. With its work, the Institute for Business Ethics and Sustainable Strategy contributes to the transformation of business practice towards responsible and sustainable management.

Photos:

Nils Kruse from FHWien der WKW at the award ceremony for the Pater Schasching Prize for promoting dialogue between business, ethics and religion (pictured third from left).

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The business ethicist Nils Kruse has been heading the Institute for Business Ethics and Sustainable Strategy (IBES) at FHWien der WKW together with Daniela Ortiz since October 2022.

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