



Emerging World

Building leaders through international development

Understanding and exploring the long term impact of
corporate international service learning programs

2015 CISL Impact Benchmark Study

Designed by Emerging World in collaboration with BD, Credit Suisse, EY, GSK and Microsoft

Corporate International Service Learning – A Multitasking Value Driver

Corporate International Service Learning works. This new Study shows that companies looking to develop leaders, engage and retain employees and offer career mobility should consider establishing Corporate International Service Learning (CISL) programs.

90% of the research respondents reported improvements in global leadership skills and 79% made positive changes to the way they work. As a key indicator of employee engagement, 75% returned from their experiences with a greater motivation to contribute more than is required for their role and over 80% of respondents have remained with the organization on return from their experience.

No wonder that Corporate International Service Learning (CISL) programs are becoming a popular and strategic tool for companies looking to build the talent and skills of their workforce. At the same time these programs address real needs in the markets where companies do business – particularly in high growth emerging markets where the opportunities are seen as greatest.

CISL programs are defined by the fact that employees travel across international borders to apply their work-based skills to a project or other assignment that serves a third party constituency. The term CISL has four defining characteristics:

- 1 Programs are **corporate**: they have business objectives and are undertaken by employees
- 2 Assignments are **international** and participants travel across national borders to complete their project
- 3 Assignments involve **service** to a constituency other than the participant’s own organization. Usually this is a non-governmental organization, small business or government agency that creates social value
- 4 Assignments focus on participant **learning** as a significant outcome.

Companies establish programs to meet a wide range of objectives but the majority are driven from either a Leadership Development/HR function or from the CSR/Sustainability team. It is often straightforward to understand whether the program is working in the near term. However, there has been very little research undertaken to establish the longer-term impact of these programs on participants or the associated return on investment for their employers.

The research addresses this gap, building on Emerging World’s 2014 study **Leadership Development That Lasts**. Above all, it establishes a benchmark from which participating companies can understand what’s working and how to develop programs that:

- build skills
- deliver business objectives
- address the challenges that partner organizations in the emerging world - supported through CISL programs - are facing.

“By giving our people the opportunity to volunteer in the continent through MySkills4Afrika, we are promoting global leadership and skills development amongst Microsoft employees globally. This has created better understanding of African markets throughout the company, whilst transferring vital skills and perspectives to enable Africans to grow, innovate and compete globally.”

Lutz Ziob

Dean of Microsoft 4 Afrika Academy

Participating Companies

Five companies worked with Emerging World to develop the CISL Impact Benchmark Study in order to learn from each other, set a standard for how to design and implement best practice CISL programs and establish the long term impact for participants in terms of leadership development, career mobility and employee engagement.

BD's Volunteer Service Trip Program is celebrating ten years of operation during 2015. The Program sends teams of skilled BD employee volunteers from all over the world for 2-3 week service trips, working in hospitals and clinics. In addition to sending volunteers, BD works with the organizations over the longer term to ensure that the partnerships and projects are sustainable.

The Credit Suisse Global Citizens Program aims to promote the transfer of skills and knowledge between Credit Suisse employees and Credit Suisse partner organizations working in education and microfinance. The Global Citizens Program is integrated into employee training and talent programs to develop leadership and other skills.

The EY Vantage Program connects future EY leaders with market leaders of tomorrow to accelerate growth and create jobs. During a six week, pro bono assignment, top-performing managers and senior managers work alongside

high-impact entrepreneurs in emerging markets to help them address their biggest obstacles to growth. In turn, Vantage advisors gain once-in-a-lifetime leadership development opportunities and the global mindset that comes with an overseas work experience.

The PULSE Volunteer Partnership is GSK's skills-based volunteering initiative. Through PULSE, employees are matched to a non-profit organization for three or six months full-time, contributing their skills to solve healthcare challenges at home and abroad. In addition to developing their leadership capability, employees bring fresh ideas and new energy back to GSK to activate change in step with global health needs.

Through MySkills4Afrika, Microsoft employees from all over the world volunteer to share their experience to build world-class skills and increase innovation and affordable technology access across Africa. Participants support organizations, ranging from start-ups and SMEs to schools, universities, government agencies, and individuals such as students, graduates, and job seekers.



About the Study

The Study was conducted using an online survey administered between April and May 2015. Each company provided a sample of participants that had returned from their experience a minimum of twelve months prior to the research. This enabled people to reflect on the what had been learnt and how it had been applied on return. A total of 310 responses were received. The surveys were confidential and anonymous and included three types of questions:

1. General questions on leadership development, employee engagement and career mobility
2. More detailed, specific questions on program support processes – to establish their impact
3. Tailored questions specific to the participating companies (not featured in this report).

Each company's program was unique in terms of

- the profile of employee that participated
- the length of assignment
- whether assignments were for individuals, groups or both
- the overall objectives

However, the Study was designed to build a better understanding of the long term impact on leadership development, retention, mobility and engagement of all programs.

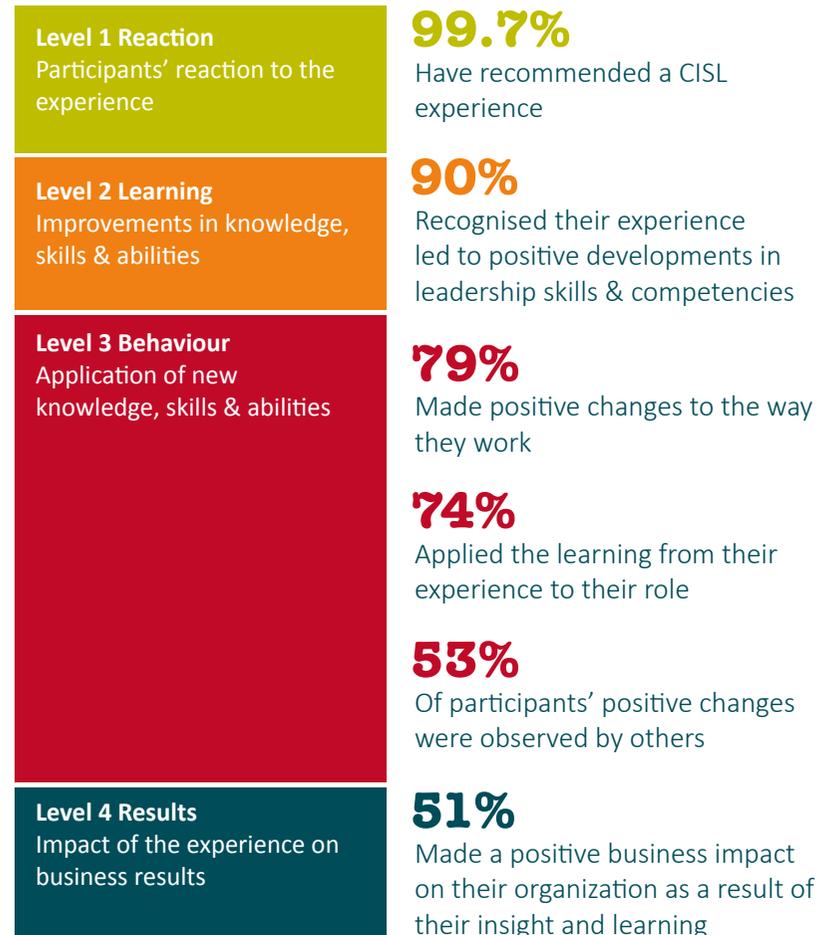
Within the Study:

- Gender participation was fairly equal: 52% female, 48% male
- The age profile was also evenly split between under 35 and over 35. The largest group of respondents (46%) were 25 to 34
- Most responses related to experiences undertaken between 2011 and 2014. 14% were prior to 2011
- 41% participated in group assignments (2 or more people going to the same site at the same time), 59% participated as individuals
- 47% undertook assignments with longer field experiences of (more than one month) and 53% on assignments with shorter field experiences (less than one month)
- Most field experiences were complemented by virtual support. Only 15% of respondents provided no virtual support



Learning Impact

Well-designed and implemented programs achieve significant and lasting impact at all levels of learning, from first reaction through to delivering business results on return.



The Study used survey questions mapped against the four levels of Kirkpatrick's evaluation model:

Level 1 Reaction: How the delegates felt about the assignment

Level 2 Learning: Understanding the increase in knowledge and learning

Level 3 Behaviour: Involves how the learning is applied and can only be assessed over time and often is judged by others as well as the participant

Level 4 Results: Relates to positive tangible business results with a causal link to the assignment.

Although each level provides valuable evaluation data, although their application broadly increases in complexity, through the levels from level 1-4.



“Through this study, it was great to be able to quantify the positive change in behaviour that our PULSE programme alumni exhibit over time after they return from their assignment – and to demonstrate that, in large part, this is due to the support of our line managers and senior leaders. We will be able to use this important data to continue to demonstrate the ROI of PULSE not only on communities and people in need, but also importantly on our talent development and ultimately GSK.”

Ahsiya Posner Mencin
PULSE Programme Director
GSK

Global Leadership Development

Respondents were asked to answer questions on leadership development using a five-point scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. A positive response includes scores for Agree and Strongly Agree.

The questions relate to 12 leadership competencies and behaviours identified from a range of recent research papers as critical for effective global leadership in the future. The competencies were identified in Emerging World 2014 research International Service Learning Programmes: The Development Assignments of the 21st Century*.

The results show that CISL programs are proving very effective for development across all competencies but the main differences emerge when looking at Strongly Agree responses which show the strongest impact on:

- Seeing things from different perspectives
- Working with culturally diverse groups or teams

CISL develops global leadership competencies



“We were easily able to map the global development competencies to our own Credit Suisse aspirations for culture and leadership behaviours at the Bank. What we found was that participants in the Global Citizens program are developing some of the strongest results for People Leadership that we have seen from any of our developmental offerings – so we are looking at how we can apply some of the program attributes to other leadership programs.”

Will Wolf

Global Head of Talent Acquisition and Development
Credit Suisse

*Cabrera and Unruh (2013), Sharkey, Razi, Cooke and Barge (2002), Pless, Maak and Stahl (2011)

Career Mobility and Employee Retention

Many companies use CISL as a way to support employees' career mobility – helping them to take on new and different roles within their companies. We asked participants to report on whether they associated their CISL experience with any job changes following their return.

The data proves that CISL is effective at building the skills and competencies required for career mobility.

75% of respondents had changed role following their assignment and half of them identified the experience as a contributing factor.

The Study shows that employees repay their company's investment in CISL programs with loyalty and retention. More than four out of five respondents are still with their organization. Even those that left had remained with their organizations on average for almost two years after they returned from their assignments.

Line manager engagement is a key contributor to employee retention: when employees feel that their experience is supported and encouraged; they are more likely to stay with the company on return.

“We were delighted to see that even though a third of respondents had their experience over five years ago, 73% are still with BD and citing the Volunteer Service Trip as a reason for staying with us and they demonstrate real pride in the company too. And for those that left, the average time they remained with the company was almost twice the benchmark. Given that we're celebrating 10 years of the program this year, these results will help us develop the program to deliver even better results in the future.”

Jerry Hurwitz

EVP & Chief Human Resources Officer
BD

Mobility

CISL advances participants' careers

75% of participants have changed roles since their CISL experience

66% have roles with increased scope or responsibility

49% have roles with increased seniority

42% participants are now working in a different area of the business

51% identified that their CISL experience contributed to their change in role

Retention



Employee Engagement

Engaged employees are a company's greatest asset and are those that 'go the extra mile'.

Employee Engagement was generally high amongst respondents with positive responses to increased pride, loyalty, motivation as well as alignment with the business' values, objectives and priorities:



Program Essentials

Within the research, we included questions related to a number of program components that contribute to overall program effectiveness. Program participants felt well prepared and considered that their assignment matching was good. However, the results indicate that more could be done once participants return from their assignments in order to achieve greater impact. Understanding how these components affect participants and program success can be an important step to ensuring a strong return on investment from these programs.

The research is showing that the majority of perceived effort is put into processes before and during the experience, but it suggests that support for the return to the business is sometimes less well implemented. Deeper analysis of the results show

that employees that are given opportunities to share their experience and to continue to engage with their partner have stronger levels of learning and retention.

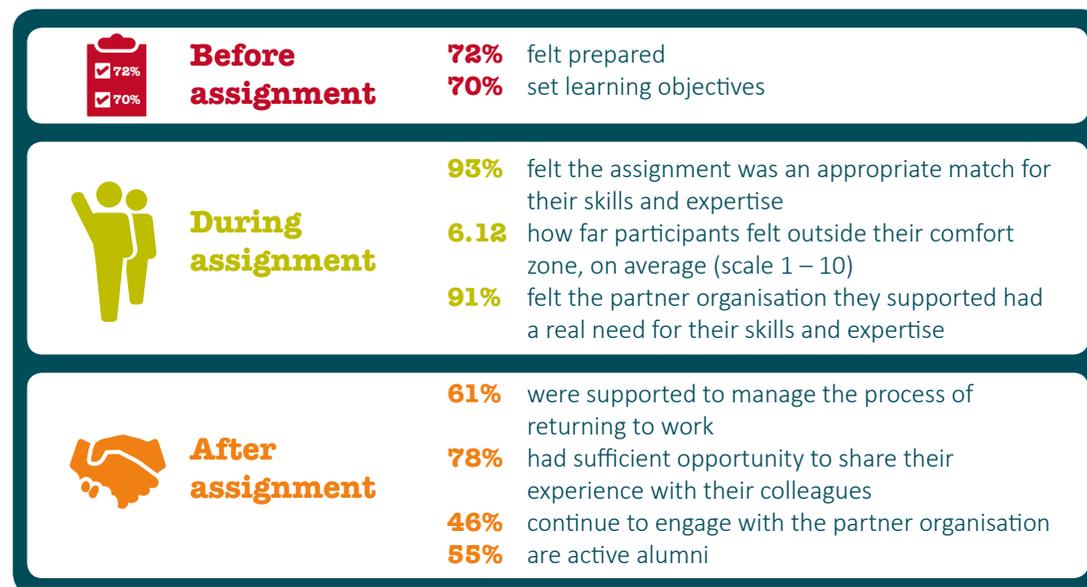
Two interconnected elements emerged as key performance indicators:

- 1 Matching employees' skills and expertise with the assignment requirements
- 2 Agreement that the partner had a real need for the assignment.

When there was strong agreement with both statements, there was stronger impact on learning, leadership development, mobility and engagement.

“My placement was the most valuable experience of my professional career. I learnt more from those six weeks than at any other period in my life. I was consistently challenged to think outside my comfort zone. It has changed the way I operate; from my leadership style through to how I interact globally. It has changed and benefited my career trajectory and is always something I will look back on proudly. It made me believe I could become a leader. The strength in the EY Vantage Program is that our Talent, Corporate Responsibility and Strategic Growth Markets functions come together to deliver the program and our Vantage Advisors connect with our EY global network. Now running the Vantage Program, I see first-hand the return on investment of each placement. This, without doubt, is one of the most rewarding parts of my job.”

Alistair Bance
Vantage Program Lead
EY



Designing Programs for Success

Our deeper analysis of the research revealed some interesting results. We identified a series of ‘impact levers’ where one process or component had an impact or influence on another aspect of the program. We then undertook a pattern analysis to enable us to help companies understand how to design a program to meet specific goals.

At a high level, the findings confirmed expectations - for example, a good match of employee with assignment will generate more positive responses than less suitable matching across most areas of impact.

However, our deeper analysis provides greater insight. For example, when employees ‘strongly agree’ that the match is good there is a stronger impact on development in the levels of learning and that this is more pronounced for some competencies than others.

A number of findings are complex, requiring detailed explanation impacting results at certain levels but not at others. These provide opportunities for deeper discussion and in some cases further research to understand their full significance.

However, one clear outcome is that assignments that address a real need yield stronger results in all of the impact areas. There is therefore little point in manufacturing an assignment that does not address a real need. The best assignments address genuine needs of partners and as a consequence the participants and their companies benefit more strongly – a triple win-win-win from which all parties benefit.

The research provides invaluable insights for program managers. Companies can use these findings to develop processes that take advantage of those impact levers that are most important to their business. It means that CISL programs can be designed and implemented to meet specific business objectives and provide strong return on investment.

Overview of Impact Levers

		Variables	Areas of Impact				
			Levels of Learning	Global Leadership	Career Mobility	Retention	Engagement
Program Components	Before	Preparations		✓		✓	✓
		Set Learning Objectives	✓	✓			
	During	Appropriate Match	✓	✓	✓		✓
		Partner’s Need for Skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Upon Return	Comfort Zone		✓	✓		✓
		Support on Return	✓			✓	✓
		Sufficient Opps. to Share	✓			✓	✓
		Continued Engagement	✓			✓	
		Active Alumnus	✓			✓	✓
	Management Involvement	Line Manager Engagement	✓		✓	✓	✓
Senior Leaders Champion		✓				✓	

Final Words from Participants

After the first few months I became a stronger more self reliant individual. I found myself able to work with people less able than me in the role and assist them to develop. I concentrated more on the bigger picture than previously, where I often could get bogged down in detail rather than outcomes.

The Program gave me the opportunity to realise that even in a very large and global company my single contribution can be very relevant to enhance the way we develop internal and external relationships, the way we deal with complexity and ambiguity and our value in the market.

I feel that there was and still is a strong element of compassionate leadership that filters from the top down. This makes me more accepting of the tough and difficult decisions that have had to be made over the years. I am also very proud that the Program has been sustained and the efforts have been directed to areas where help is needed most.

My summer working in Tanzania was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Living and working in an emerging economy on a project that would impact hundreds of people was an incredibly unique opportunity which I would recommend to anyone that seeks new challenges. I was proud of the company for supporting such projects, and for building partnerships with such great organizations. On a personal level, I gained skills that have pushed my career to new heights and opened the door for opportunities that I would not have considered before.

When the firm makes investments like this in its people, it is a demonstration that it values education, flexibility, and professional growth among its people - and who would not want to work at a place like that?

The experience has made a lasting impression on my personal and professional life. I had been seeking a way to broaden my horizons and expand the breadth and depth of my skillset beyond the company while making a positive contribution to society. My week-long experience not only forced me to adapt to a completely unfamiliar situation, but also confirmed my belief that everyone can truly make a difference and that no act of compassion or kindness is too small.

Any effort to make even the smallest difference requires strong partnerships that can share and maximize their resources whether those resources are manpower, expertise, supplies or financial aid.

Oh, I am the difference maker...#Needtobreathe: That moment in the project where you realise you've helped someone - that you will never meet - through the organization you've helped. Share your knowledge and be a difference maker.

My assignment has been a life-changing experience for me... These types of partnerships require a leap of faith on the part of the organizations and their participants. But when the right match is made, the benefit to society is far greater than what we try to accomplish alone.

About Emerging World

Emerging World is a specialist consultancy that helps your business build a better future.

At a time when companies are becoming more integrated into society, when expectations of companies and their leaders are growing and when the pace of change, particularly in the rapidly developing parts of the world is faster; Emerging World works to:

- Provide experiences that help people to make the personal changes in perception and behaviour required to be able to succeed in an uncertain, fast changing and globally integrated world.
- Help companies develop programs and inclusive business strategies that connect their business objectives with their social responsibility in rapidly developing parts of the world.

- Enable people and organizations tackling social issues in the emerging world to access skills and perspectives that help them to address the challenges and issues they are facing.

For more information on the 2015 CISL Impact Benchmark Study contact Emerging World on +44 (0) 79705 12271 or email research@emergingworld.com www.emergingworld.com



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