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"CSR does not stand for Customer Service Representative!"

It's a daily frustration for Dr. Fatih Mehmet Gul, Net Impact member, Middle East Ambassador, and a man driven to bring responsible business practices to the Middle East. "Knowing what CSR means is not a top priority in this country," Gul acknowledges.

Dr. Gul is a medical doctor living in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates. And he's earned a financial MBA from Yeditepe University, in Istanbul, Turkey. Gul is using his business acumen, and world view, to bring business responsibility and Corporate Social Responsibility to the forefront in the Middle East. He's persistent, but admits, it's not an easy road.

"My main strategy [to change that] is to affect young managers. It's easier to explain to them what CSR is and the benefits of CSR. My biggest challenge is that I often have to tell people, 'CSR does not stand for Customer Service Representative.'"

Gul works for the Toyota Corporation in Saudi Arabia. He is the company's International Affairs Coordinator and is in charge of their CSR and Community Services programs. In his work, Gul is developing vocational training support, SME – small and medium enterprise - support and loan programs, health and community charity programs and international initiatives. His main goal is to increase the number of people employed in the Middle East.

Currently serving as Net Impact's Middle East Ambassador, Gul joined Net Impact after watching a McDonald's Webinar which was promoted by Net Impact. "I receive digests and CSR news from sources around the world," Gul shared. I was always hearing about Net Impact and after listening to McDonald's vice president for Corporate Social Responsibility, Bob Langert, I decided to join."

In his capacity as Net Impact's Middle East Ambassador, he finds it easier to convey the Net Impact message -- and his own personal commitment to social responsibility -- through his increasingly popular website, www.csrmiddleeast.org. "I am the founder of CSR Middle East, which is the first of its kind, volunteer-based online CSR site in this region."

Through his site, Gul targets a global audience as he advocates and shares CSR activities underway in Saudi Arabia. His current online projects include economic development, unemployment, and health care. He's now hoping global CSR experts will learn about socially responsible activities unfolding in the Middle East. He wants Net Impact's internationally-based community to weigh in and help him "standardize and improve the CSR activities and efforts of Middle East companies." That's because Net Impact, Gull says, provides him with the unique ability to "have an international platform to discuss CSR and initiatives."

Visit the Net Impact CSR Middle East group to learn more about Dr. Gul and the responsible business practices he is working on.