

CEO Purpose Report 2022

Leading for the Long Term

Welcome to the 2022 CEO Purpose Report

This year's report revealed one resounding truth: the age of short-term shareholder value is over, and the age of long-term, sustainable, stakeholder growth is here to stay.

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With geopolitical uncertainty, an unprecedented talent shortage and inflation reappearing, the challenges for CEOs have never been greater. But so too are the opportunities these moments create.

The successful CEO recognizes that the constantly evolving global market provides the negative and positive forces in which they must build value. Those driven by purpose seem more confident to lead, act and invest. Purpose helps them navigate volatility and provides guidance in times of uncertainty.

This is our fourth year studying CEO perspectives on purpose, and our first year measuring a thousand CEOs in seven markets. While last year's findings showed that CEOs believe purpose truly powers progress – this year's findings indicate that CEOs are beginning to act on this belief. In an age where belief leads to action, and action eclipses belief, we are seeing CEOs intensify their purpose practices. From 83% of CEOs claiming they either have or want a purpose statement, to 73% stating that their purpose now directly influences the majority of their decision-making, it is clear that purpose has become a key part of the CEO leadership framework.

As you read the report, you will find we have identified three key themes: purpose matters (and is actioned by purpose-driven leaders), healthy business ecosystems (where CEOs rely on their purpose to align with partners and suppliers), and the employee era (where purpose plays a key role in attracting and retaining the best talent).

Throughout the report you will also notice one common, underlying theme: the need for adaptive leadership. CEOs can use purpose to manage short-term shareholder value, long-term stakeholder value, and build resilience for when the next challenge or opportunity appears.

Dave Allen
Brandpie Founder

Highlights from our 2022 study

#1

Purpose powers long-term success

Having a clear purpose, ambition, and strategy is the number one driver of long-term value creation

73%

Purpose is used as a strategic compass

73% of CEOs agree purpose influences the majority of their decision-making

83%

There is an established market for purpose

83% of CEOs either have or want a purpose statement

62%

Crisis breeds opportunity

62% of CEOs are accelerating their efforts related to purpose as a result of COVID-19

57%

Employees more valuable than shareholders

57% of CEOs view employees as more important than shareholders in creating long-term value

4.8x

People leaders increasingly in charge of purpose

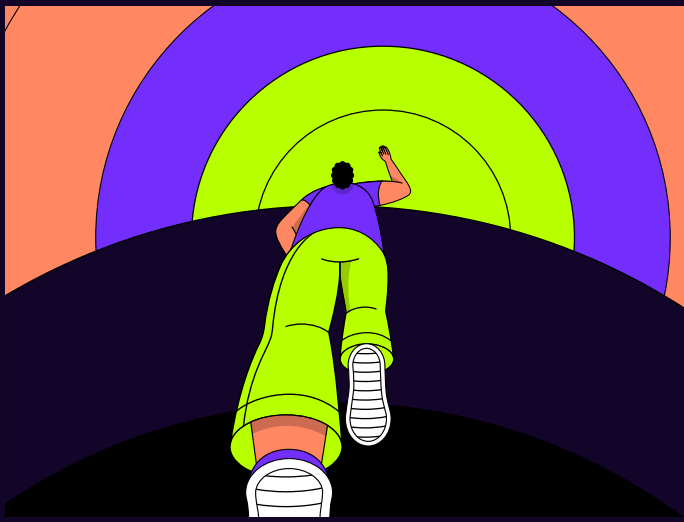
There is nearly a five-fold increase in the number of CEOs who feel Chief People Officers should define purpose (vs. 2021)

#1

Purpose measured by top and bottom line growth

Sales, growth and financial performance are the top metrics for measuring purpose

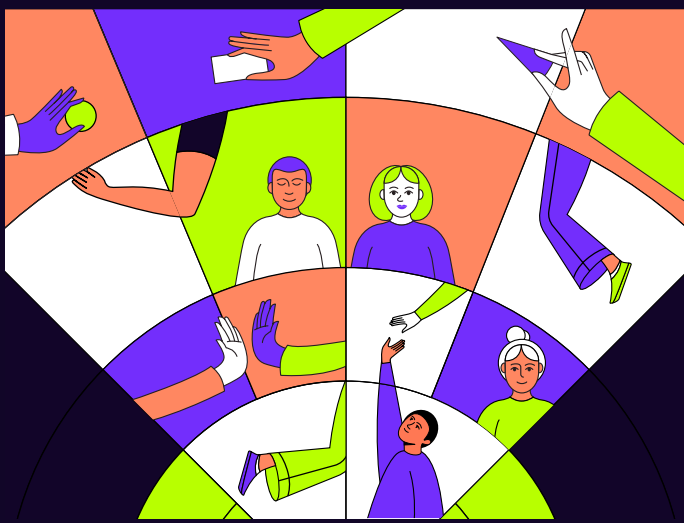
The three key purpose trends for 2022



Purpose Matters

Find out why successful CEOs perceive purpose to be so important for driving business growth.

> [Read more](#)



Healthy Business Ecosystems

Learn how progressive CEOs are utilizing purpose to manage their ever-growing stakeholder network.

> [Read more](#)



The Employee Era

Understand what CEOs and Chief People Officers need to do to overcome the great employee challenge of our age.

> [Read more](#)

Leading for the long term

The COVID-19 pandemic precipitated a re-examination of purpose for businesses and individuals worldwide.

Issues that had been progressing at a steady pace pre-pandemic started to intensify and accelerate in boardroom discussions: around the future of work; digital transformation; sustainability; diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI); and more.

Across these issues, our survey revealed an overall emerging narrative, away from shareholder value and profit to a longer-term view that comprises a wider range of stakeholders.

There is a clear shift in priorities from shareholders (37%) to customers (61%) and employees (57%). This view is prevalent across countries, company types, size of organization and the length of service of CEOs.

The pandemic galvanized senior leadership, reinforcing the notion that CEOs need to believe in their organization's purpose to ensure that their companies thrive. Misalignment can lead CEOs to believe that they are at an impasse, which can lead to disillusionment. However, it can also be a driving force for proactive change, to build common ground throughout an organization, and gain momentum.

Our research shows that there is still work to be done. Most CEOs are prioritizing efforts in long-term value creation (73%) and company purpose (62%) as the pandemic winds down from its height – the latter rising from almost half (34%) in the previous year. But figures also show that using technology to improve processes and offerings is the top priority for CEOs when it comes to creating long-term value in 2022 (consistent with results from the previous year). While upgrading technology can help to create mid-term value, its evolving nature means that CEOs seeking long-term purpose will have to expand their criteria for value creation.

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Purpose defines an organization and propels it by informing its future trajectory and culture. It defines what you sell and how you sell it. It describes the kind of people you want to recruit, the kind of environment you'll create for them and the quality of relationships you build with all the people your organization touches. Purpose infuses literally every aspect of an organization.

Sarah Gillard

CEO, A Blueprint For Better Business

Most important stakeholders for long-term value creation

37%

SHAREHOLDERS

57%

EMPLOYEES

61%

CUSTOMERS

“

We want to make sure that we’re creating long-term value for all our stakeholders. And when I talk about stakeholders, I talk about our clients, I talk about EY people, and I talk about society.

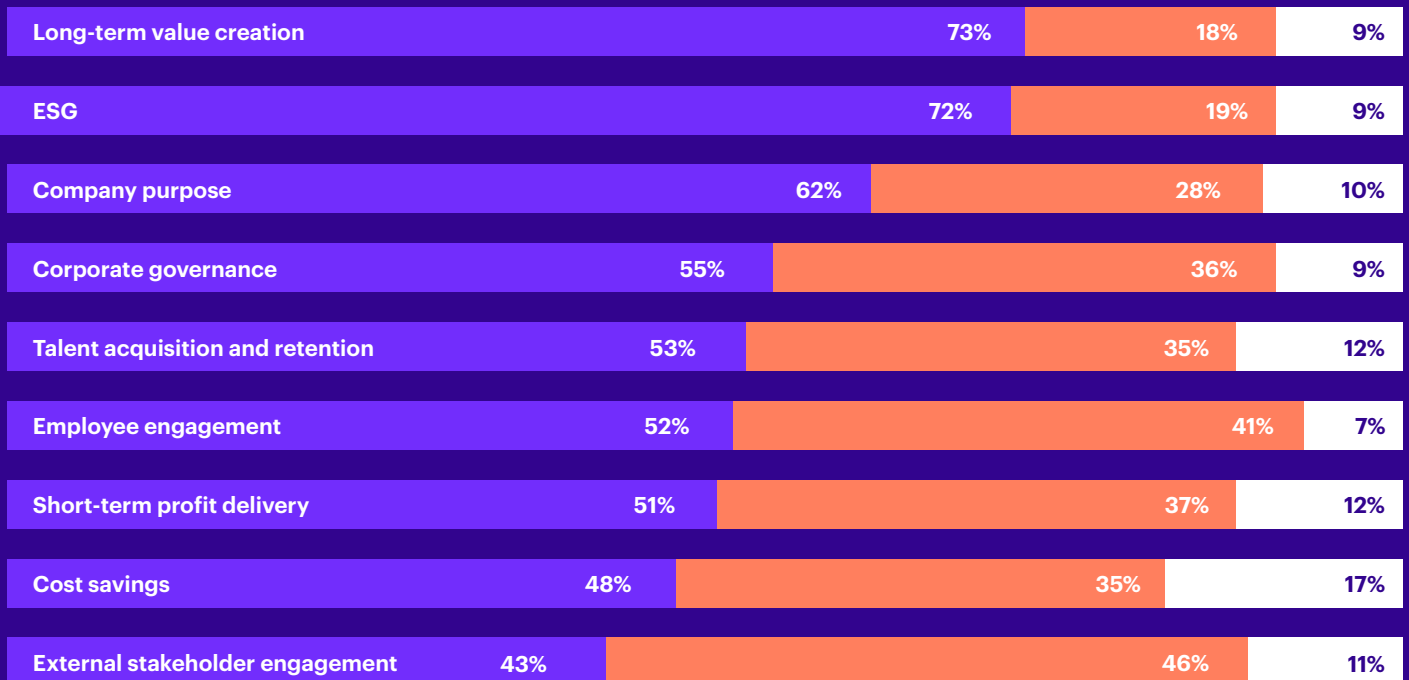
Carmine Di Sibio

Global Chairman & CEO, EY



As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, is your company accelerating, maintaining, or decelerating efforts in the following areas?

n=1000



■ Accelerating
 ■ Maintaining
 ■ Decelerating

Priorities that have been de-escalated include the focus on efficiency to reduce costs (down from 38% in 2021 to 28% in 2022), as well as access to capital (33% in 2022 versus 44% in the previous year).

It seems that companies might be scaling back to what matters, rather than focusing on priorities that are contingent on business continuity and market strength.

Talent, however, remains a top requirement of long-term value creation. 40% of CEOs indicate that talent is a top future challenge – one that they are keen to solve. As individual priorities shift, companies are finding that they are increasingly required to adapt and devise creative solutions to attract top talent.

From value to values

A critical insight from our survey is the paradigm shift from shareholder “value” to purpose-led “values.”

Businesses are seeking a new equilibrium between generating value for shareholders and leading with purpose. Although “value” is still a key business goal, it is now joined by crucial elements which are fundamental to nurturing companies’ longevity, and which help them to drive “value” in the long run. The chief aspect that connects these elements is purpose.

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The post-pandemic world is a different workplace and people will have to work together to create this new workplace. As the talent pool becomes wider, employers have more choice, but also the talent pool has more choice of who they want to work with.

Abhijit Bhaduri

Author & Former Chief Learning Officer,
Wipro

**CEOs prioritizing
company purpose**

34%

IN 2021

62%

IN 2022

Purpose has always been integral to business, but it came into its own at an unprecedented scale during the COVID-19 pandemic. The exponential degree of uncertainty which businesses – and the world at large – were facing meant that businesses had to rethink what mattered. Business ventures that were perceived to have profited from a global healthcare crisis were publicly shamed. In New York City, the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection reported that it had placed 3000 retail outlets on notice over price gouging. Some third-party merchants on Amazon were fined by the New York Attorney General for price gouging hand sanitizer, and US senators and attorneys general urged the business to take more action to discourage profiteering.

On the flip side, purpose-conscious companies have embraced stakeholder capitalism – seeking to identify the needs of different groups of stakeholders – clients, employees, suppliers, local communities and more – and to align their own organizational purpose to these. For example, over 70 companies – including IBM, Nestlé and Unilever – have committed to using Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics which were established by the World Economic Forum in association with leading accountancy firms to create a set of universal ESG disclosure rules.

This shift is driven from the top down, with 64% of CEOs agreeing that it is their responsibility to define purpose for their organizations. The role of CEO is quickly incorporating that of “chief values officer,” with leaders the primary spokespeople for their organizations on social and political issues.

Although CEOs are architects of purpose, determining the values that feed into and from this requires input from various sources. These include employees, who are a barometer of political, social and cultural priorities, as well as other stakeholders, both internal and external. Purpose is a shared responsibility, and driving values starts from within an organization, creating a ripple effect outwards.

“

Crisis reveals character.
It reveals our values.
It reveals who we are.
And that is, every morning,
one of the first things I
think about: how are we
going to express and show
our values to the world?

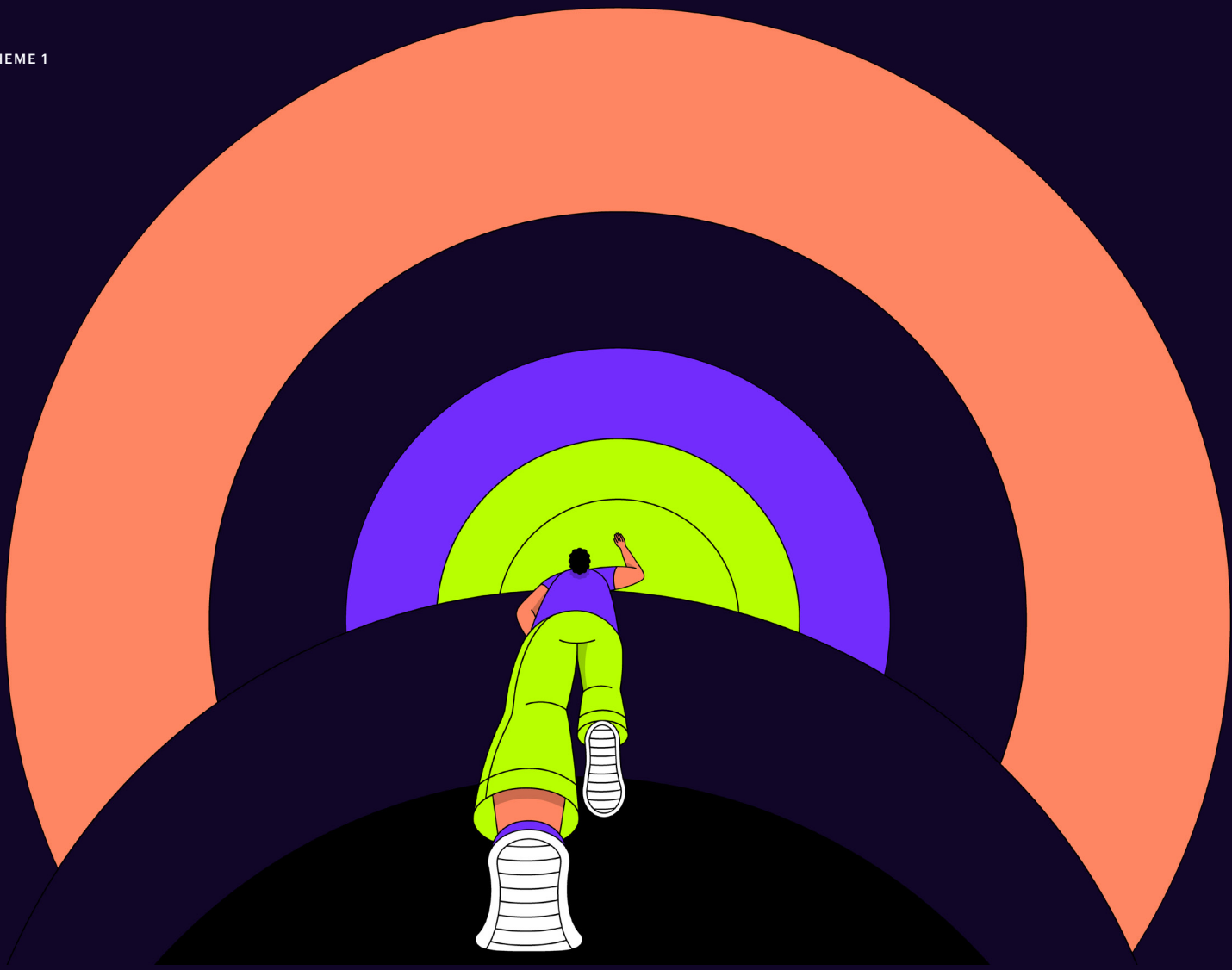
Ed Bastian

CEO, Delta Air Lines

**What makes a great
purpose statement?**

// NICK RANGER

> [Click here to read](#)



Purpose Matters

Purpose has always mattered to business. There are two critical challenges in this purpose-driven age, where individuals have more access to information than ever before, as well as a plethora of platforms on which to make themselves heard.

One is pinpointing purpose that matters, by determining what this means to different stakeholders. The other is incorporating this purpose into everything that a company does, in order to attract, engage and, ultimately, appease a wider stakeholder base.

In theory, CEOs appear to be committed to the emphasis on stakeholderism (as opposed to shareholderism).

A majority (58%) of CEOs believe that having a clear purpose, ambition and strategy creates long-term value; our survey finds that prioritizing long-term value creation is key to most industries, and among most type of companies.

When asked about the connection between their purpose as an individual and their organization's purpose, 73% of CEOs said that it influenced more than 50% of their decision-making. Yet the emphasis on stakeholderism is still somewhat struggling to translate into reality, where the plurality of stakeholders' needs still requires balancing against shareholders' wishes. Purpose is a practical solution for reconciling the two.

Looking back on the last five years, many CEOs (42%) say that they have created most value for their organizations by using technology to improve offerings and processes. But purpose (58%) narrowly edges out good products and services (54%) and cutting-edge technology (54%) when it comes to creating long-term value. This dissonance suggests that it is easier for businesses to continue to prioritize shareholderism for short-term profit when what they must do is persevere and put in the hard work of developing purpose to deliver long-term gains.

“

By definition, purpose is aspirational. It's always going to be a horizon that keeps moving. It energizes people. It allows you to apply a lens on your talent strategy, your business strategy, and your client strategy.

Tiger Tyagarajan
CEO, Genpact

Purpose-washing

Governance guidelines, corporate bylaws, proxy statements, director pay policies, and responses to shareholder proposals still prioritize shareholder value – demonstrating purpose-washing at its most fundamental level.

Yet, people are highly aware of “purpose-washing” initiatives and are accustomed to scrutinizing the authenticity of companies’ claims.

The threshold of public opinion for exaggerated purpose claims is low, and companies that are caught out face repercussions on multiple fronts: to their brand reputation and customer loyalty, and overall, to the loss of trust. Purpose is an intrinsic aspect of trust, and once it is lost, repairing the damage is an uphill battle.

Because of its significance to organizations, purpose can no longer be constrained by Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives or advertising campaigns.

The key role of purpose is shifting from advertising, branding and public relations, with only 23% of CEOs believing that its main function is to create advertising campaigns (down from 41% in 2021).

Campaigns support purpose, not the other way around. And almost a third of CEOs now believe that the main role of purpose is to guide sustainability activities – a leap from just 9% in 2021. These insights help to substantiate the trend we are seeing of purpose being regarded as a mechanism for business longevity.

What do these findings mean for Chief Marketing Officers?

// MARYLEE SACHS

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The emperor has no clothes. Just saying that you're a purpose-led organization and not changing anything else seems inauthentic, which is then doubly inauthentic when purpose is about being authentic.

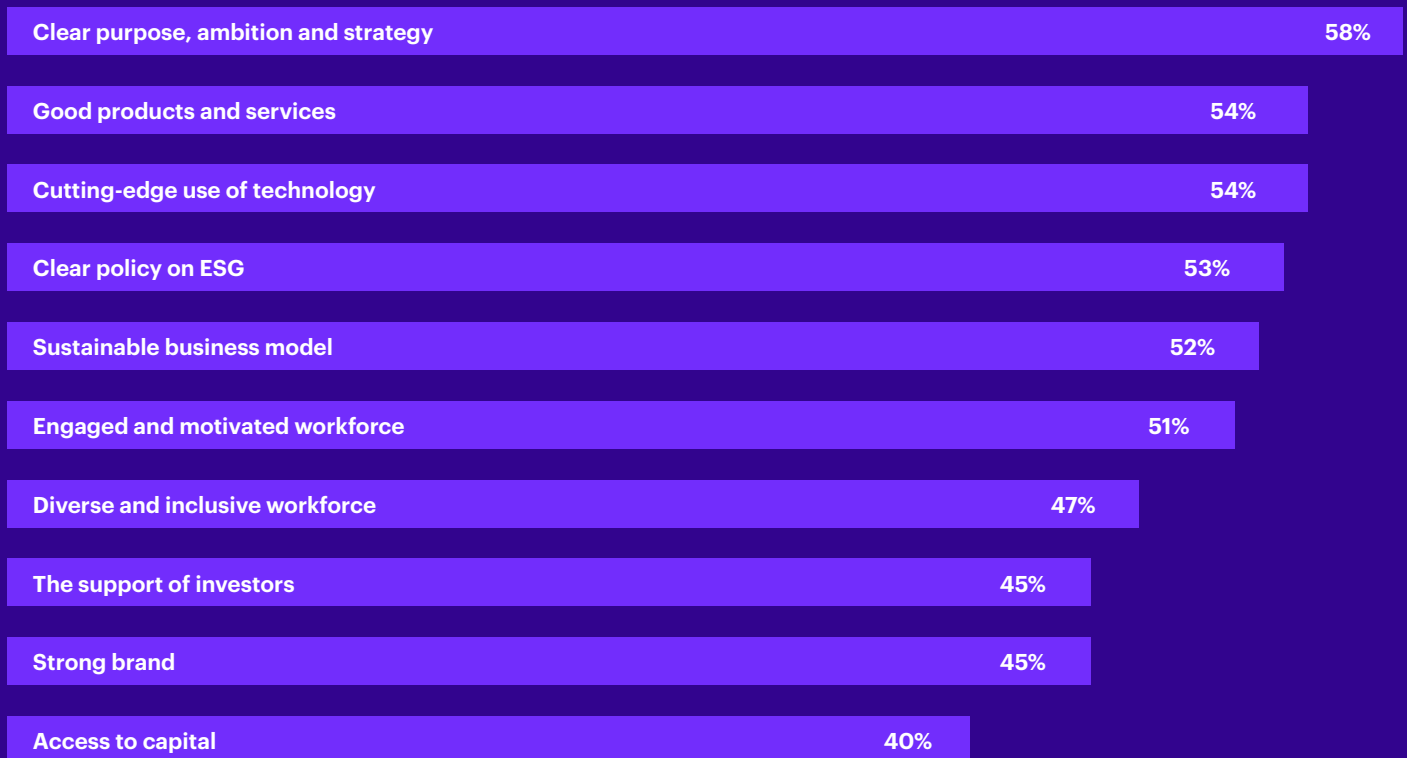
Cat Tully

Founder, School of International Futures



How would you rank these factors in order of importance to create long-term value?

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Practical steps: start with a statement

The first step to leading a purpose-driven business is to have a statement of purpose that matters.

83% of CEOs we surveyed already have purpose statements or want to create one for their organization; 55% are in the latter category.

It is a start, but all businesses should have such statements as a default, to enable them to establish long-term value. These statements need to be data-driven, achievable and measurable. They also need to be reassessed periodically, to ensure their continued relevance to evolving trends, shifting industry landscapes, and general political, social and cultural changes.

For a purpose statement to be useful, companies also need to be able to evaluate their success. Purpose is closely connected to sales and growth, with the majority of CEOs surveyed using these to measure performance against purpose. Other metrics can include brand value and reputation, employee engagement, and innovation, as well as more granular environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) and DEI metrics.

Purpose is aspirational, as highlighted by Tiger Tyagarajan, CEO of Genpact. It starts with intentions. But intentions do not create long-term value. Purpose is also a process. Businesses need to proactively plan for purpose that matters. To do this, they need to develop realistic purpose statements that will reinforce their activities, have robust metrics in place to stay on course, and systematically reassess their purpose, to ensure their longevity within evolving markets.

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Most corporations need a hard business case. They need to measure the impact of purpose. We've got a critical race on now to get the metrics that show the benefit to a business and to those that it serves, to society, and to the planet.

Mike Barry

Speaker & Strategic Advisor

CEOs who have or want a purpose

28%

HAVE A PURPOSE

55%

WANT A PURPOSE

Recent crises have impacted every business across the globe and highlighted fault lines in our fragile systems. At the same time, our response to these same crises has shown our ability to collectively innovate, work globally at speed and scale, and move from models of competitive advantage to radical collaboration. We need to nurture healthy business ecosystems that are resilient and adaptive in the face of increasing uncertainty.

As outlined in the introduction, we are seeing businesses accelerating their efforts to deliver long-term value (73%), ESG (72%), and company purpose (62%) despite the impact of the global pandemic. 2022 also sees a majority of CEOs (55%) accelerating their efforts related to corporate governance, up from 36% in the previous year.

We are at a unique moment in history, where the focus is on business leaders to reimagine “business as usual” and act as stewards to shape a more sustainable future. This starts with addressing what it means for a business to thrive and think beyond the bottom line. A healthy business ecosystem is one that benefits all of its stakeholders, where value is not only extracted, but also generated and given back. It provides mutual benefit to all parties involved. ‘Investors, employees and clients live in an ecosystem and breathe the air of the community,’ says Tiger Tyagarajan, CEO of Genpact. ‘I don’t think you can create a vacuum that says I’m separate from the community.’

“

Whenever I’m introduced to a potential firm that we are thinking of partnering with or acquiring, I talk about our purpose.

Carmine Di Sibio

Global Chairman & CEO, EY

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We have learned that purpose serves our people and it serves our customers well, because it’s the thing that unites us. It’s not that we’re perfect, but we do try to take decisions with the lens of purpose.

Shai Weiss

CEO, Virgin Atlantic

Supercharging value through collaboration

Harnessing a healthy ecosystem has the potential to supercharge collaboration and the value a business can deliver.

It allows business to think beyond its operational boundaries and appreciate where it can make the greatest impact. Defining a purpose that seeks to solve a meaningful challenge gives businesses a powerful strategic lens. A lens to understand their current ecosystem and identify where there is a need to foster new relationships and unlock potential for progress.

Ecosystems are a catalyst for innovation; made up of diverse stakeholders, resources and perspectives. Tapping into the collective intelligence of a business ecosystem enables companies to bring new thinking to problem-solving. Understanding the mega-trends impacting your broader ecosystem will encourage innovation that is relevant to the needs of a rapidly evolving market. And a connected ecosystem enables business to cascade innovation and mobilize action.

Embracing a healthy ecosystem is more than an innovation or stakeholder engagement strategy. For many, it is critical to the boardroom agenda.

More than a third of CEOs believe that a key driver of purpose in organizations is influencing potential partners and suppliers to align with the organization's values. Purpose is considered a manifesto, with 30% of CEOs planning to prioritize building a stronger partner ecosystem for value creation in the next five years.

What do these findings mean for Chief Sustainability Officers?

// LOUISA HARRIS

> [Click here to read](#)

Taking a holistic approach

Nurturing a healthy ecosystem requires strategic and holistic thinking, beyond the roll call of partners and clients or a stakeholder materiality matrix.

Businesses need to understand themselves in the context of all stakeholders. More importantly, they need to understand how their purpose is relevant across their ecosystem to inform decision-making and amplify their ambitions.

61% of CEOs view customers as their most important stakeholders for long-term value creation. There is a need for business to recognize, respect and align organizational purpose to that of clients – today and those of the future. There is also an opportunity to bring clients on the purpose journey so that they can amplify business messages and advocate for the causes it supports. By innovating to deliver sustainable goods and services, businesses can increase the choice architecture available to consumers and influence more positive consumption behaviors.

Historically business has run the risk of considering its supply chain as separate from its core operations and scope of business responsibility. The opposite is also true – supply chains are the lifeblood of a business. Businesses cannot thrive without a healthy and resilient supply chain. Moreover, for many businesses, their greatest impact lies in their supply chain, especially for B2B companies. Businesses who work with suppliers to align to their purpose and sustainability commitments can work collaboratively to problem-solve.

Nearly a quarter of business leaders see connecting to local communities as the main role of purpose in organizations and a quarter of CEOs identify that future generations are key stakeholders for creating and capturing value in the long run.

A business ecosystem is made up of more than transactional relationships and its health will depend on the wellbeing of the communities and environment it is part of. Long-term value creation requires generating value across the business ecosystem as well as seeking to regenerate and restore parts of the ecosystem businesses have a negative impact on. Ecosystems also need to be considered in the context of future time horizons. Businesses who define their purpose to address the complex challenges of today are doing so to safeguard a more sustainable tomorrow and to act as stewards for future generations.

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We are not an NGO. We are a business. We are for profit. Absolutely. But we're for society and we're for the environment as well. Figuring out how we give a voice to younger people is incredibly important to us.

David Boynton

CEO, The Body Shop



The Employee Era

The COVID-19 pandemic kick-started a new level of workplace introspection, with the workforce contemplating essential questions about their personal and professional lives, as well as the intersection between the two.

One of the consequences of this substantial mindset shift of work and life priorities was The Great Resignation, with professionals in their early fifties considering early retirement, and more workers actively choosing to quit jobs that barred working from home (or to switch to roles with hybrid working arrangements).

Misalignment between companies' and employees' values are not limited to personal preferences. Employees have also been increasingly bold in bringing companies to task for social issues. In 2020, Facebook employees staged a walkout in protest of what they deemed inadequate policing of posts on the platform by then-US President Donald Trump. Apple employees pushed back against the tech giant's return-to-office policies in 2021. And Netflix employees also staged a walkout in 2021, in protest of specific content deemed transphobic.

Talent is a priority in the employee era

Gone are the times when salary and benefits were the key determinants of jobseeker interest.

Companies now contend with a range of factors related to personal, social, and cultural preferences – and sometimes political inclinations too. When asked how they measure organizational performance against purpose, sales and growth came out on top (37%). CEOs also ranked organizations' attractiveness as a place to work (27%), employee motivation (23%) and employee turnover (23%) as key factors.

The traditional model of employees complying to an organization's purpose at the risk of their own has been upended. Today, the latter influences the former, giving rise to a complex, hybrid model of corporate purpose.

This "new normal" in the job market – one that prioritizes employees' personal preferences and priorities – also means that purpose matters more so than ever, as organizations need to attract the best talent in order to maintain their competitive advantage.

Employees are a key stakeholder in long-term value creation, and our survey showed that 29% of CEOs think CPOs have the responsibility to define the purpose of an organization, compared to 6% the year before.

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I deeply value making sure that people can feel comfortable in being themselves, who they are, and bringing their authentic self to work.

Christophe Schilling
CEO, Genomatica



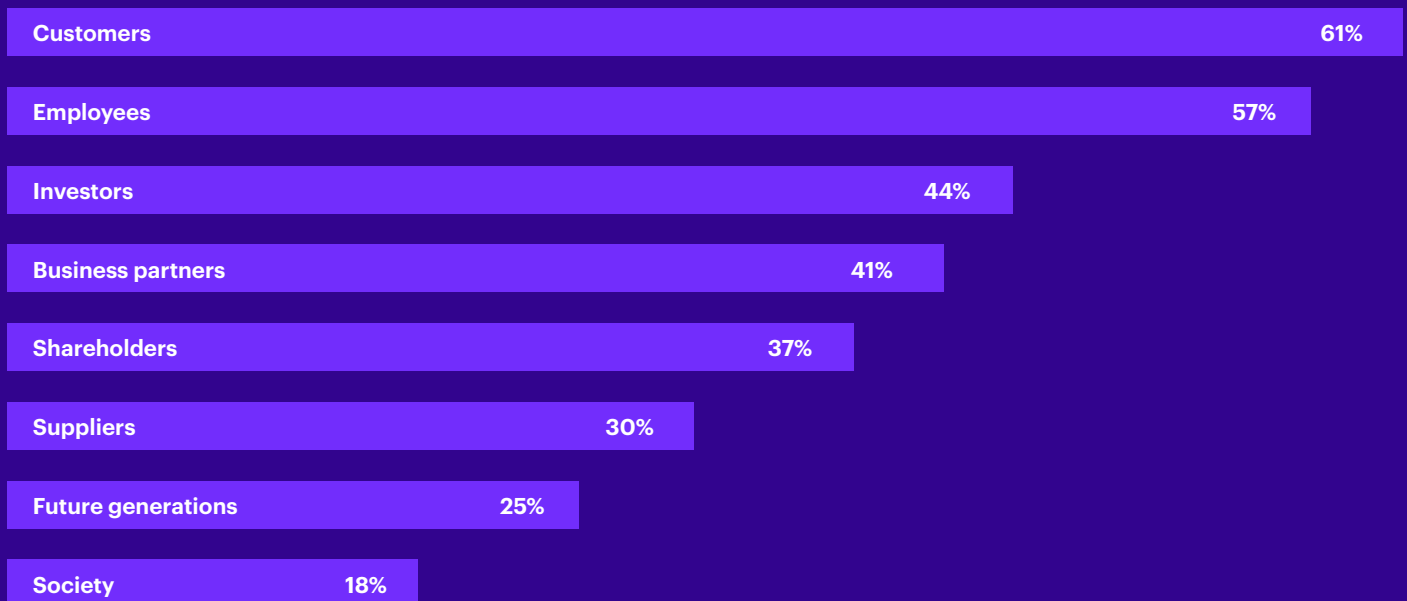
Your leadership shadow is being observed by people in your organization all the time. The minute you compromise, your organization won't believe that you're serious about purpose anymore. And then you are lost. You have to live up to it as a leader every day.

David Boynton
CEO, The Body Shop



When you think about your most important stakeholders for long-term value creation, what do you think of?

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CEOs are prioritizing employee engagement as businesses increasingly struggle to attract and retain talent. The ongoing battle for talent sees 52% of CEOs accelerating their efforts at employee engagement, compared to 41% the year before. Where we work has affected employee prioritization, shifting from workplace-incidental perks – for example, foosball tables, Beer Fridays and yoga classes – to less tangible forms of benefits – for example, the lack of a commute – simultaneously highlighting the growing importance of purpose and piling the pressure on it to deliver.

When it comes to realizing value creation priorities, CEOs are more concerned about attracting and retaining talent (40%) than access to capital (30%) and receiving pressure from stakeholders to prioritize short-term profit delivery (26%).

From an operational standpoint, they are worried about effective resourcing. But this emerging trend is also another crumb in a long trail of evidence demonstrating senior leaders' shift to long-term priorities, as the battle for talent attraction and attrition intensifies.

CEOs who think CPOs are responsible for purpose

6%

IN 2021

29%

IN 2022

CEOs accelerating their efforts at employee engagement

41%

IN 2021

52%

IN 2022

What do these findings mean for Chief People Officers?

// CHRIS HOLMES

> [Click here to read](#)

The Uncompromisable

Purpose drives sustainable outcomes

The time to argue the business case for sustainability is over with sustainability and ESG now sitting firmly on the boardroom agenda.

With 193 countries signed up to deliver on the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, this is the decade to deliver sustainable action before it is too late.

Business is a powerful engine for change and we are seeing leaders recognize this with 30% of CEOs believing the key role of purpose is to guide sustainability activities. This is a promising proportion of leaders, but given the scale of change needed, we still have work to do.

We also found that 30% of CEOs who believe that the primary function of purpose is to guide decision-making across their organizations.

For organizations and leaders to step up to tackle global challenges, sustainability must be hardwired into core business strategy. A first step to achieving this is defining a purpose that clearly sets out a commitment to stewardship and is then activated through influencing and advocating for a sustainable future.

Bold ambition is not enough, stakeholders need confidence that businesses are delivering on their promises. At a time when business claims are being scrutinized for greenwashing it is imperative that businesses link their purpose and sustainability strategies to meaningful ESG KPIs and transparently measure and share their progress.

The top three ESG priorities that CEOs want their businesses to address by 2025 include developing a net-zero strategy (57%), focusing on the ESG factors of supply chain management (45%) and providing employee education and engagement on ESG issues (43%). These complex challenges should be a priority for every business and a thriving future depends on our ability to engage ecosystems and work in partnership. Coming in next is creating more sustainable goods and services (41%). The business world recognizes that its sustainability responsibility goes beyond addressing its operational footprint and must tackle its core offer in order to create long-term value.

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Today we have an economy where people serve business and business serves finance and finance serves itself. Can we invert that and have an economy where finance serves business, business serves people and people serve each other and the planet?

Alastair Colin-Jones

Author & Project Lead, Economics of Mutuality



Part of being a bigger company is to bring people along with us because our interest is not just cleaning up our own value chain and then say ‘Well, we’re clean,’ while the world is burning.

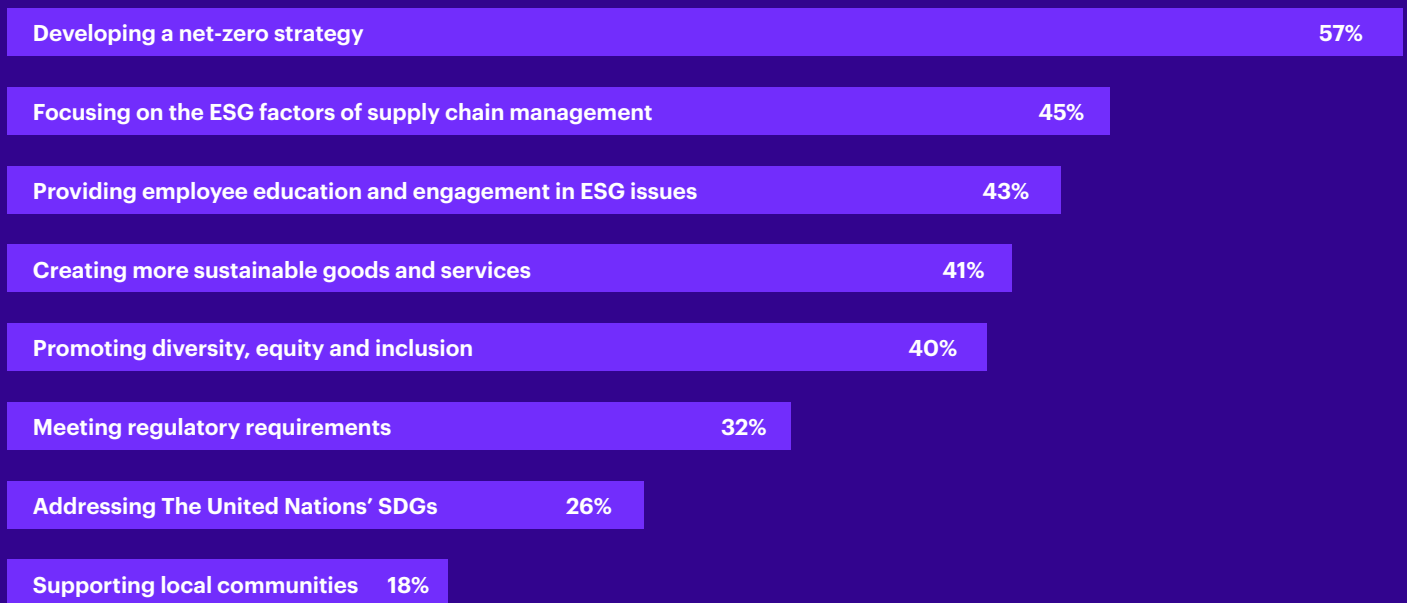
Dr Emma Keller

Head of Sustainability, Nestlé, UK & Ireland



What are the ESG priorities for your business to address by 2025?

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Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)

Research has shown many commercial and organizational benefits of a diverse and inclusive workplace, including higher revenue growth, greater readiness to innovate, increased ability to recruit a diverse talent pool, and higher employee retention.

Our data shows that nearly half of the CEOs surveyed agree, with respondents saying that a diverse and inclusive workforce is to create long-term value, and with 40% of CEOs ranking the promotion of DEI as a key ESG priority to be addressed by 2025.

Having a diverse and inclusive workforce is only the first step in an organization's DEI journey. Businesses need to encourage and facilitate diverse perspectives from across the business, and across all levels, including senior leadership.

Overall, the current challenge is for CEOs to provide a foundation for workplaces that are truly diverse, equitable and inclusive – and this begins with purpose. This alignment of DEI with purpose also needs to cater for geographical differences. Global businesses are currently exporting one-size-fits-all DEI practices in acts of "DEI colonialism" from head offices to regions across the world, where culture, history and language – and, by association, DEI practices – differ. More work needs to be done to ensure that multinational organizations' purpose allows for granular distinctions to be made, so that DEI practices can be catered according to local customs.

Purpose, legacy, and environmental and social responsibility take precedence with CEOs, as do the relationships that drive them, both internally and externally.

'Business has probably the most significant negative footprint on the planet and society today,' says Mike Barry. 'But it's also, on the other side of the coin, the source of the solution that we need to build a better future.'

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Recruitment should focus on the diversity of cognitive abilities and backgrounds, but also creating the kind of associated psychological safety that's required for that diversity to be brought to the fore in an organization. You can have a lot of diverse people and the outcome still isn't diverse.

Cat Tully

Founder, School of International Futures

The Way Forward: Adaptive Leadership

The world is changing and, with it, the myriad challenges and opportunities that businesses face.

Multiple global, healthcare, economic and geopolitical crises have forced personal introspection as well as collective re-examination of businesses and their ecosystems. ESG and DEI are gaining traction exponentially, as businesses grapple with how to engage sustainably and inclusively.

If we continue to apply old rules to the new order, we lose the chance to redesign the way we do business. But what is required is not the prescription of a set of new rules to follow. Instead, we require adaptive leadership to lead the charge into the future.

The purview of this charge extends beyond that of individual companies. 'This generation of leaders has got the ability to consciously shape what the future might look like,' says Sarah Gillard. 'Not just for their business, but for the industry they work in, for the broader economic, regulatory, political and financial system.'

Adaptive leadership is an iterative, ongoing process that focuses on cooperation. Leadership is no longer a solitary venture, but a team endeavor. It allows CEOs to take on different roles when cooperating with stakeholders to discover, activate and illuminate purpose.

Business leaders need to always be on "listening" mode, to be open to experimentation and failure, and to allow diversity to become an internal driving force. 'Even if the instinct is to try and create a new model following a period of turmoil, we should do the opposite and deliberately be a work in progress, deliberately be an experimental culture,' says Annie Auerbach, Author & Co-founder of Starling. 'We're going to listen, to collect data, and to explore a range of possible futures.' Having open channels of communication and sourcing diverse opinions as well as keeping a close eye on consensus will lay the groundwork for CEOs to be able to make better informed decisions in times of disruptive change.

Leading by this principle allows CEOs to gain insight into what is important to the business, its employees and wider ecosystem. It helps to shape an organization's core purpose so that it is relevant to all stakeholders and can influence business decisions throughout times of trouble.

The next crisis might be just around the corner, and businesses need to redesign themselves so that they are adaptive and resilient in a highly complex, ever-changing world.

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Saying you don't have all the answers, when people are desperately seeking them, is incredibly hard to do as a leader because we're paid to have the answers. But we've built the trust to ensure that we develop the answers together.

Ed Bastian

CEO, Delta Air Lines

Survey methodology and acknowledgements

Working closely with iResearch Services, we conducted an online survey among 1000 CEOs based in Australia, China, France, Germany, India, the United Kingdom and the United States over Spring 2022.

Australia = 100
 China = 200
 France = 100
 Germany = 100
 India = 100
 United Kingdom = 100
 United States = 300

Respondents were invited to participate in the survey via email and an online survey panel. Data was monitored to remove any “career respondents” and geo-IP checks were included to ensure that the relevant countries were verified. Due to rounding, numbers presented throughout this report may not add up precisely to the totals provided and percentages may not precisely reflect the absolute figures.

The survey was conducted by iResearch Services, which is a full member of the Market Research Society and abides by its rules, which are based on the ESOMAR principles.

Fieldwork was also run in collaboration with Griffith University, the world’s leading business school for sustainability research.

For more information about the methodology, please email: elisa.cecilli@brandpie.com

Fieldwork run in collaboration with
 Griffith University



Griffith Business School

Queensland, Australia

AUTHORS



Elisa Cecilli
 HEAD OF INSIGHTS
 & INNOVATION

> [LinkedIn](#)



Dave Allen
 FOUNDER

> [LinkedIn](#)



MaryLee Sachs
 CEO, US

> [LinkedIn](#)

ALSO WORKED ON THIS REPORT

Amadeus Redha
 HEAD OF MARKETING

Meghan Ganson
 DESIGNER

Antonia Barbari
 JUNIOR DESIGNER

Michael MacKay
 CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Chris Holmes
 MANAGING PARTNER,
 EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Nick Ranger
 MANAGING PARTNER,
 CONSULTING

Hannah Palmer
 SENIOR CONSULTANT

Nicky Campbell
 MANAGING PARTNER,
 DIGITAL

Harry Tyler
 CONSULTANT

Paul Campbell
 TECHNOLOGY & UX PARTNER,
 DIGITAL

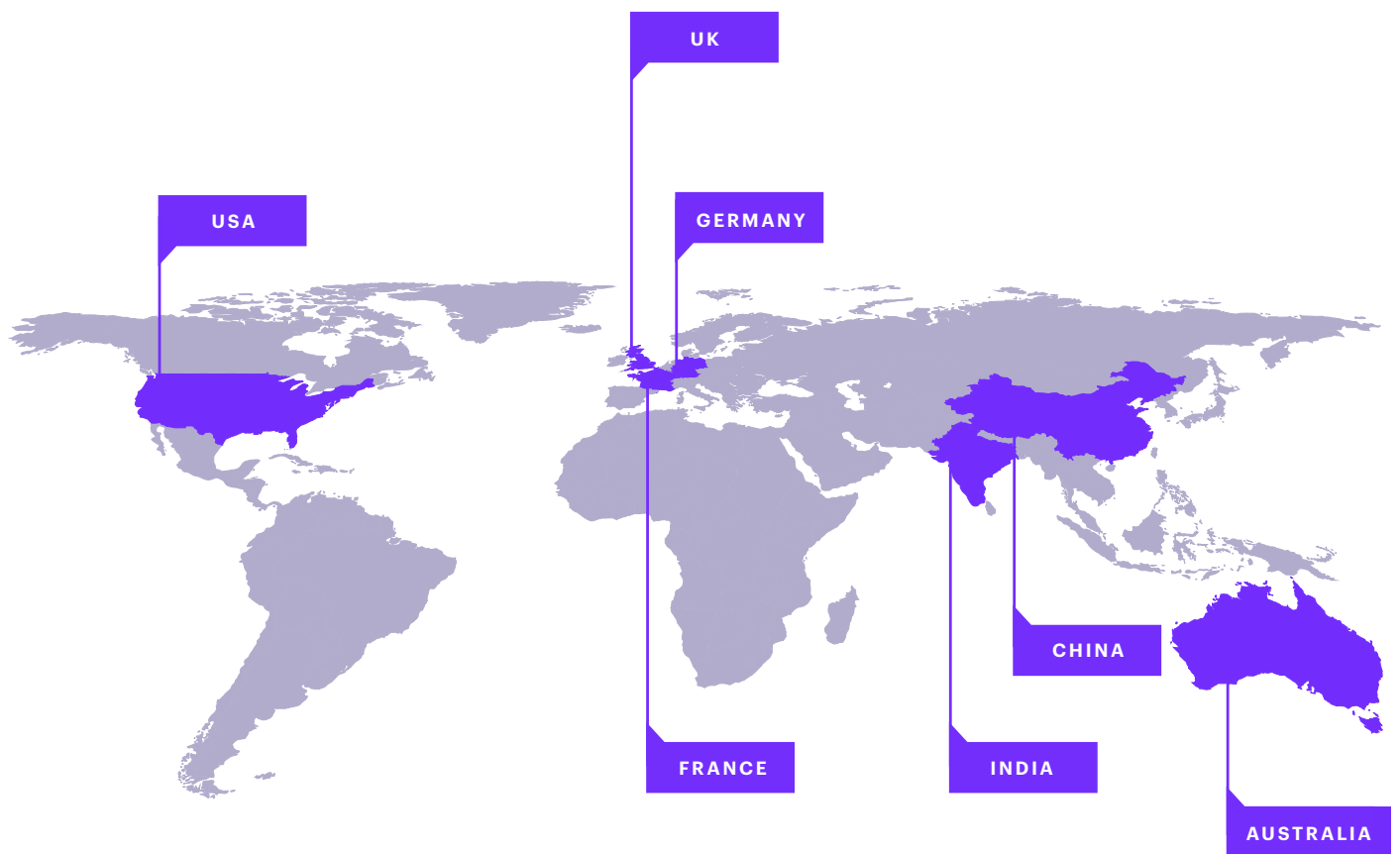
Joanne Kerr
 STRATEGY PARTNER

Pip Llewellyn
 DESIGN PARTNER

Louisa Harris
 HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY
 & SYSTEMS CHANGE

Poppy Trayner
 CONSULTANT

Max Bhugra-Schmid
 CONSULTANT



1000

CEOS SURVEYED

7

MARKETS ANALYZED

56%

CEOS LEAD 5000+ EMPLOYEES

75%

CEOS RUN ORGS WITH >\$1BN TURNOVER

INTERVIEWEES

1. Annie Auerbach, Author & Co-founder, Starling
2. Mike Barry, Speaker & Strategic Advisor
3. Ed Bastian, CEO, Delta Air Lines
4. Abhijit Bhaduri, Author & Former Chief Learning Officer at Wipro
5. Carmine Di Sibio, Global Chairman & CEO, EY
6. David Boynton, CEO, The Body Shop
7. Alastair Colin-Jones, Author & Project Lead, Economics of Mutuality
8. Sarah Gillard, CEO, A Blueprint for Better Business
9. Dr Emma Keller, Head of Sustainability, Nestlé, UK & Ireland
10. Christophe Schilling, CEO, Genomatica
11. Tiger Tyagarajan, CEO, Genpact
12. Cat Tully, Founder, School of International Futures
13. Shai Weiss, CEO, Virgin Atlantic

