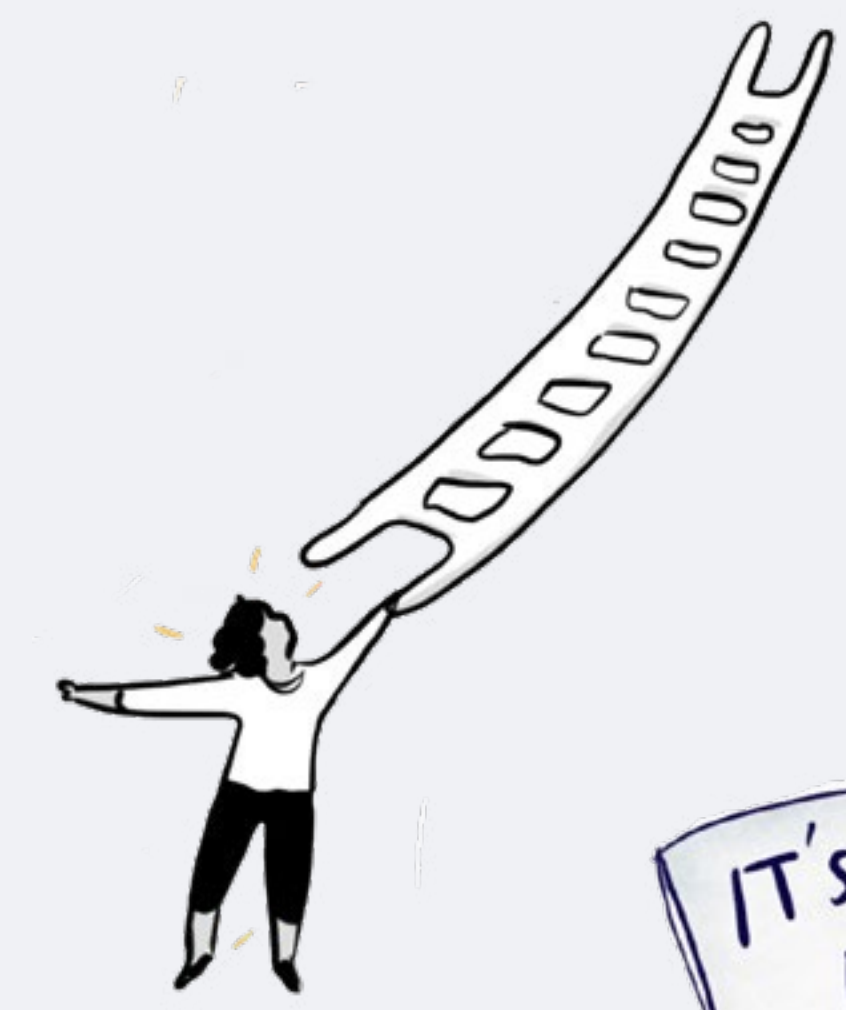
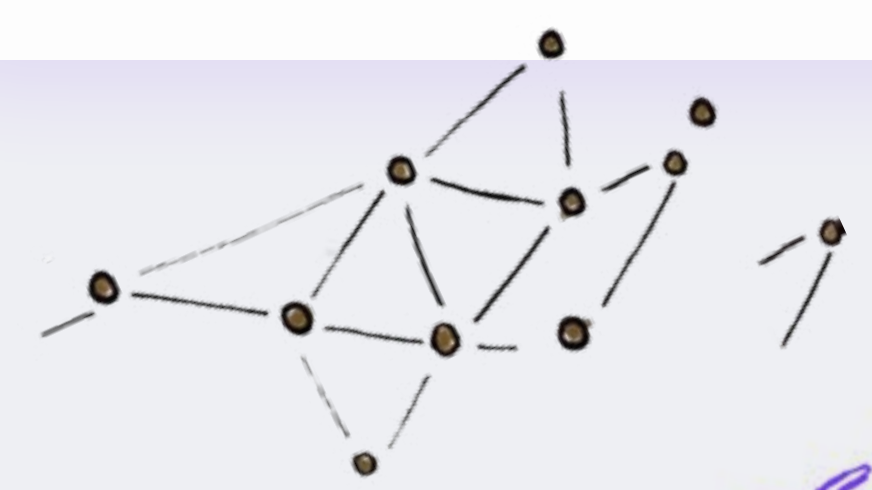


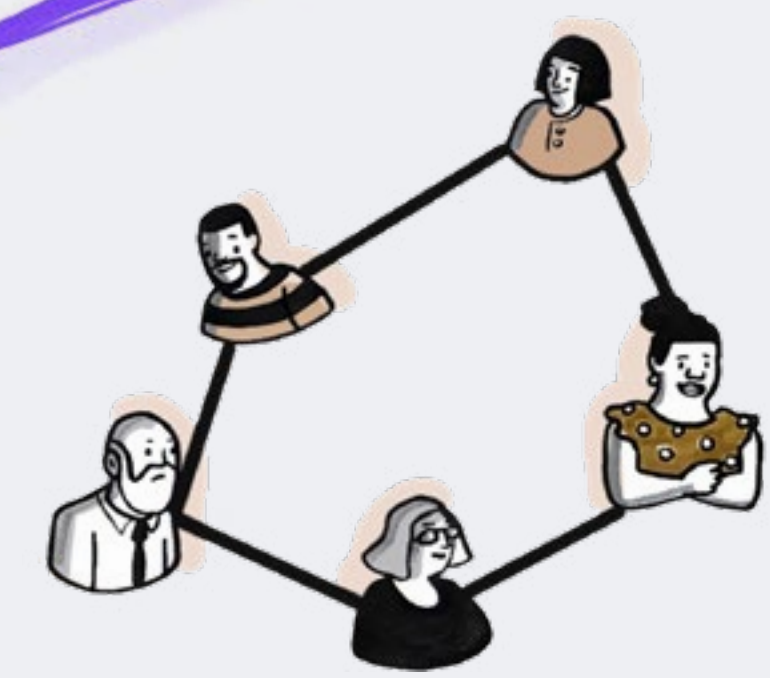
SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP PLAYBOOK

Levers for change

Accelerating sustainable action



WHAT LEADERSHIP DO WE NEED... TO ACCELERATE SUSTAINABLE ACTION?



With thanks

Thank you to those who joined one of our sustainable leadership roundtables. Your wisdom and insight has been inspirational and has helped shape the content of this playbook.

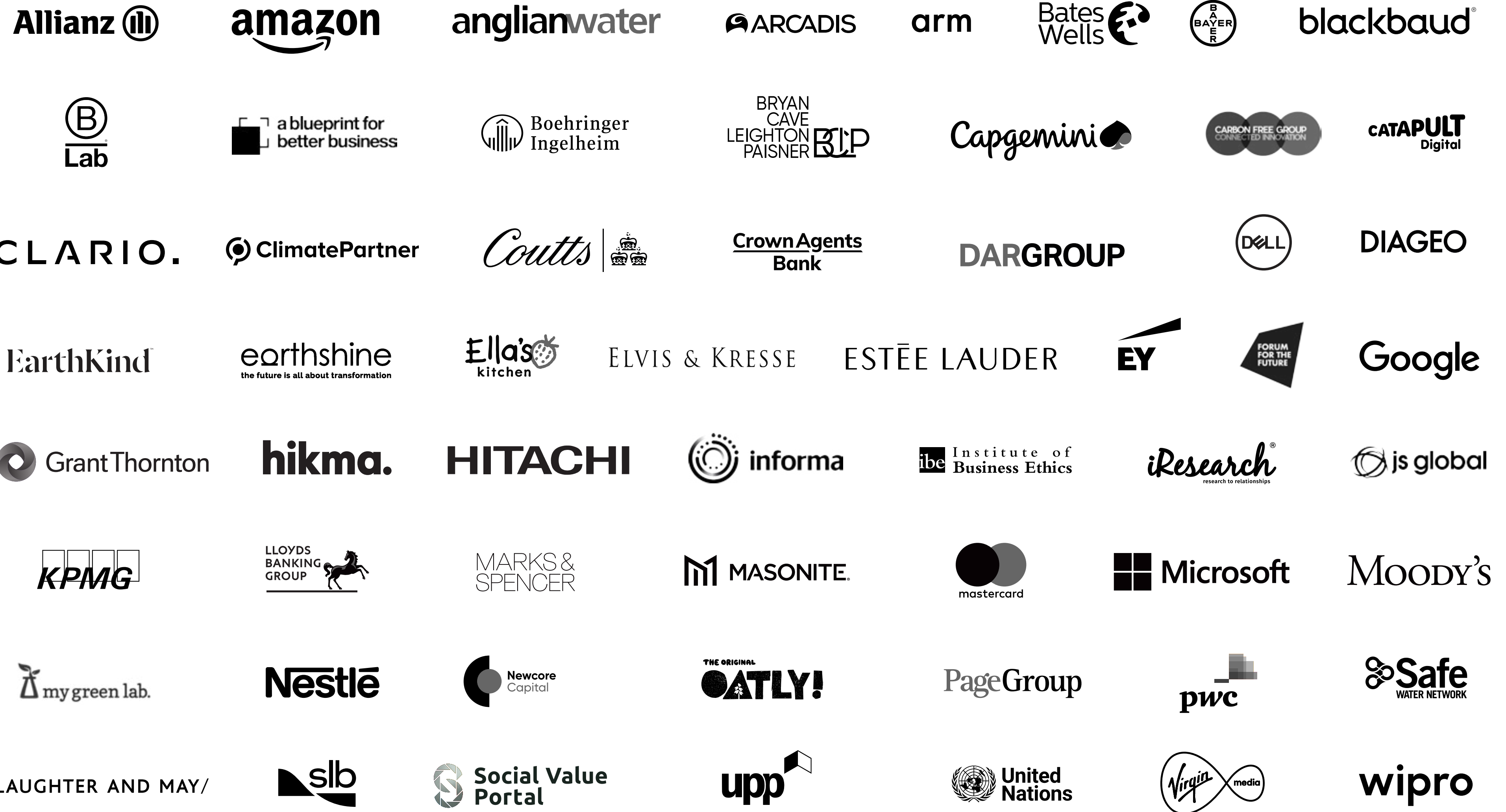
With thanks to Temujen Gunawadana for creating our visual minutes

With thanks to our roundtable partners.

ANTHROPY™



And finally, a special thank you to the Board Intelligence Think Tank, our key partner for the '22 and '23 sustainability series.





Louisa Harris

Head of Sustainability
and Systems Change,
Brandpie

In this decade we must deliver sustainable action

Business is a powerful engine for innovation and is uniquely placed to deliver change at scale. Now is the time for businesses to accelerate their actions and play a crucial role in shaping a more sustainable future.

Leaders have a responsibility to empower their teams, unlock innovation, and create a culture where change can happen. We need business leaders to focus on how they can dial up their ambition and translate it into accelerated impact.

Today, sustainability is undoubtedly on the C-suite agenda. It is well understood that sustainability is not just “the green stuff”; it is a complex and holistic business issue that requires leadership alignment and accountability to address.

To move from incremental change to sustainability transformation, building organizations that are regenerative, restorative and resilient, leaders need to ask themselves and their organizations, “what sustainability challenges are we uniquely placed to solve?”.

Businesses that connect their purpose to how they will create and build long-term sustainable value will be the leading success stories of tomorrow.

New thinking, new actions

Sustainability is an issue that connects us all and by taking the lead, every business has an opportunity to engage with their customers, employees, suppliers, shareholders, and wider stakeholders in new ways.

This new way of engagement must centre around ‘radical collaboration’. Radical collaboration enables leaders to leverage their ecosystems to create and innovate, with the goal of delivering long-term positive impact.

The market leaders of tomorrow are the ones who are asking today how they can be the best for the world, rather than the best in the world.

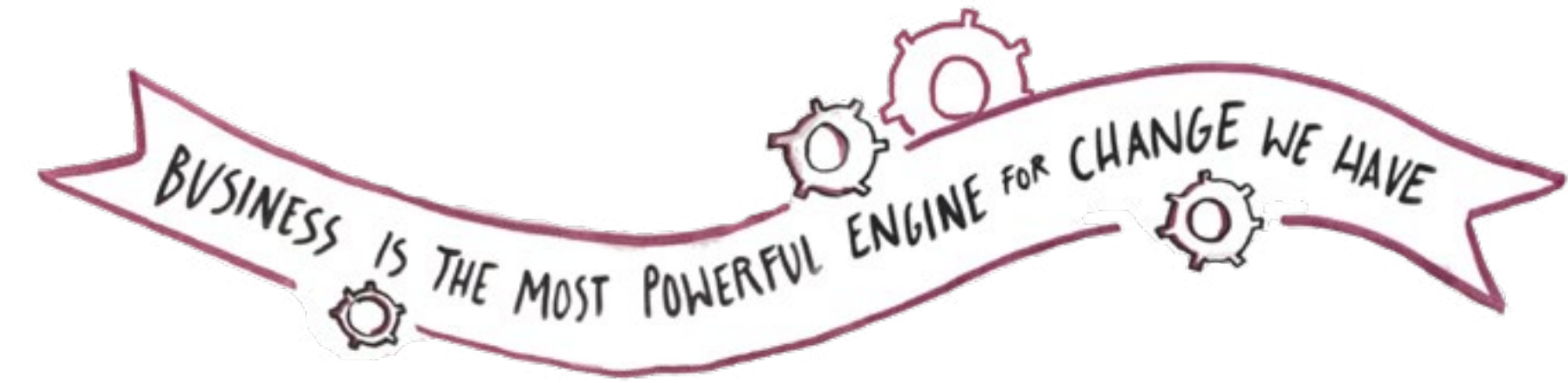
Business leaders must also think about how they can use their influence

to advocate for a more sustainable future. Bringing your partners, suppliers, and shareholders on the journey to build shared value will enable you to forge more meaningful and resilient relationships.

Inaction is not an option.

Those who do not think beyond compliance or fail to understand the role they have to play in the global sustainability agenda will be left behind. We are seeing the rise of “conscious quitting” and divestment as talent, customers, and investors all want to play their part, and only invest their time or money in organizations that are aligned to their values.

Responding to the systemic sustainability challenges of our time will take creativity, courage and collaboration. This goes beyond technical solutions and data measurement, to a rethink of what leading for sustainability looks like and what it means to be a corporate steward.



“

Responding to the systemic sustainability challenges of our time will take all of our creativity, courage and compassion.

Louisa Harris

Head of Sustainability
and Systems Change,
Brandpie

When we think about today's sustainability challenges, one thing is clear. We cannot do it without bold leadership



We are grateful to everyone who has joined our sustainable leadership roundtables. The result is this series of practical and high impact levers for change, designed by leaders, for leaders.

The goal throughout our sustainable leadership series been to create a community of change makers, creating space to share experiences and co-create recommendations for tackling challenging topics. Over the past year, we have engaged with over 150 business leaders in the UK and US to explore how we can collectively accelerate sustainable action.

We have distilled the insights and recommendations emerging from our dialogues into a leadership playbook that is designed by sustainability leaders for leaders in any role who wish to shape a more sustainable future.

This playbook contains a series of levers for change, questions to ask and leadership traits to embody. Our hope is to empower leaders, wherever they are on their sustainability journey to activate their sphere of influence and understand how they can accelerate sustainable action at this critical moment in time.

Our playbook for accelerating sustainable action

Click through to explore



We need the sustainability leaders to paint a picture of the future worth living up to.

Sir Tim Smit
 Founder
 The Eden Project

7 big questions leaders should be asking themselves



What leadership do we need to accelerate sustainable action?



How are you activating your ecosystem to deliver positive impact?



How do we finance our sustainability strategies so that they realize their ambition?



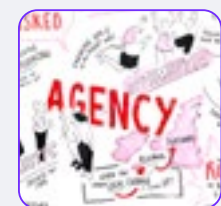
How do we align leadership, brand, talent and commercial strategy to deliver sustainable outcomes?



How do we lead courageously without greenwashing?

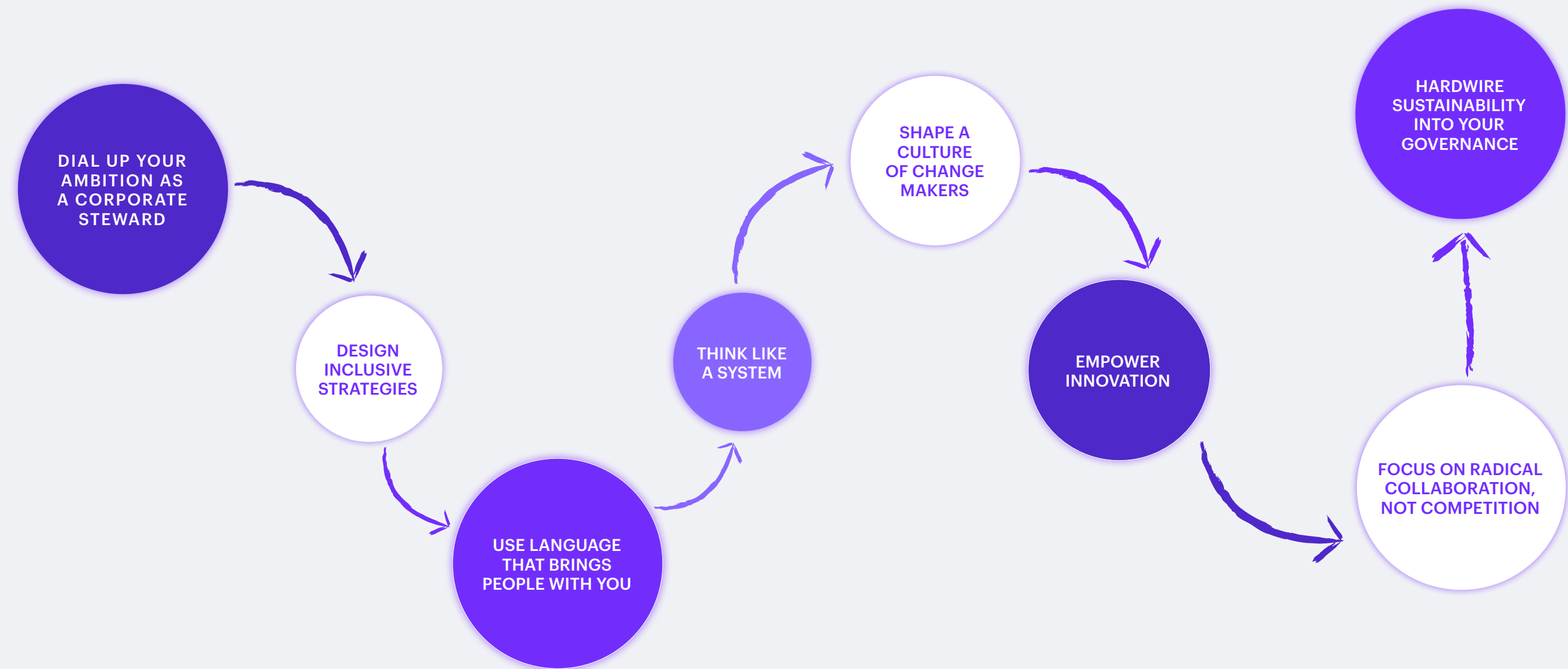


How do you inspire action and drive change through employee action?



What is the role of business in delivering a sustainable future that is fair to future generations?

8 Levers for change



9 Leadership traits needed to drive change

How to host your own sustainable leadership roundtable

Questions for leaders

The first step to action is understanding where you are on your journey today.

Based on our discussions, we have found 7 key questions that leaders should be asking of themselves and their organizations.



ACCELERATING ACTION

What leadership do we need to accelerate sustainable action?

- Q How can we build capacity in our leadership team to understand today's systemic challenges, and how they are connected to our business, its impact, and our expertise?
- Q Do we set goals that are aligned to planetary boundaries and do they go beyond compliance?
- Q How are we dialling up our ambition to deliver impact at scale and speed? Are we communicating urgency with language that motivates, rather than paralyzes?

“ We need business leaders to view that the scale of the sustainability transformation needed is on par with the digital evolution businesses have had to adopt. This is a large-scale change agenda and demands the resource and attention to achieve it.

Emma Keller,
Head of Sustainability at Nestle UK&I



ACTIVATING YOUR ECOSYSTEM

How are you activating your ecosystem to deliver positive impact?

- Q How do we use our purpose and/or sustainability strategy to inform new business decisions, investment and who we partner with?
- Q How are we advocating for a more sustainable future? Are we using our voice to influence systems-change and activate our sphere of influence?
- Q What more can we do to collaborate with our ecosystem to have a greater impact than we could have on our own?

“ We need to move beyond incremental, sticking plaster solutions, and instead seek to unlock transformational change. Doing this requires businesses to engage their whole ecosystem.

Laura Gherasim
Director, Sustainable Futures, Capgemini Invent UK



FINANCING SUSTAINABILITY

How do we finance our sustainability strategies so that they realize their ambition?

- Q How can I communicate to the board and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in their language, to make the most powerful case for financing innovation and change?
- Q How can we be smarter in deploying resources we already have?
- Q Where can I involve the CFO and finance team early on in the process of developing and embedding the sustainability strategy?

“ Without sustainability considerations, finance is only part of the picture of true performance. With the CFO on board, sustainability data can sit alongside financial metrics at the heart of decision-making, and businesses can look beyond compliance to understand the role of sustainability in driving performance and long-term value.

Matt Bell
Global Leader, Climate Change and Sustainability Services, EY





Dr Scarlett Brown,
Head of Board
Intelligence's Think Tank

Leadership alignment and board engagement

When we talk about aligning leadership and hardwiring sustainability into business decision-making, the board is a vital part of the ecosystem. Visible buy-in from the board and C-suite is an essential agent for change; without it, sustainability sits on the sidelines. When performance is linked to sustainability KPIs, business behaviour follows. If the CFO gets involved, the board sits up and listens.

As responsible leaders, the challenge is to make sustainability part of everything we do; embedded in strategy and a key measure of the health and value of our companies.

So how do we do this in practice?

Firstly, we need to understand the board's role in driving impact and how to best work with them. With pressure rising from investors, regulators, employees, customers and the public; forward-facing boards have ESG on the agenda. They are rethinking how strategy, purpose and sustainability connect and the metrics they need

to measure, monitor and manage. Governance and reporting are often treated as compliance-based hygiene factors, but they can be powerful tools that drive change internally, and earn trust externally.

Second, sustainability leaders need to educate and empower the board.

We know that many boards feel unprepared to make decisions in response to sustainability challenges. This puts responsibility on those leading change to educate, inform and build confidence. It also means speaking the language of the board and governance so we can seamlessly plug sustainability into decision-making.

And finally, we need a set of far-reaching questions that create a dialogue between the board, the business and investors. Because questions drive innovation and collaboration. They enable people to translate targets into what is meaningful, embed strategy, change culture and drive impact.



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As responsible leaders, the challenge is to embed sustainability throughout our organizations.

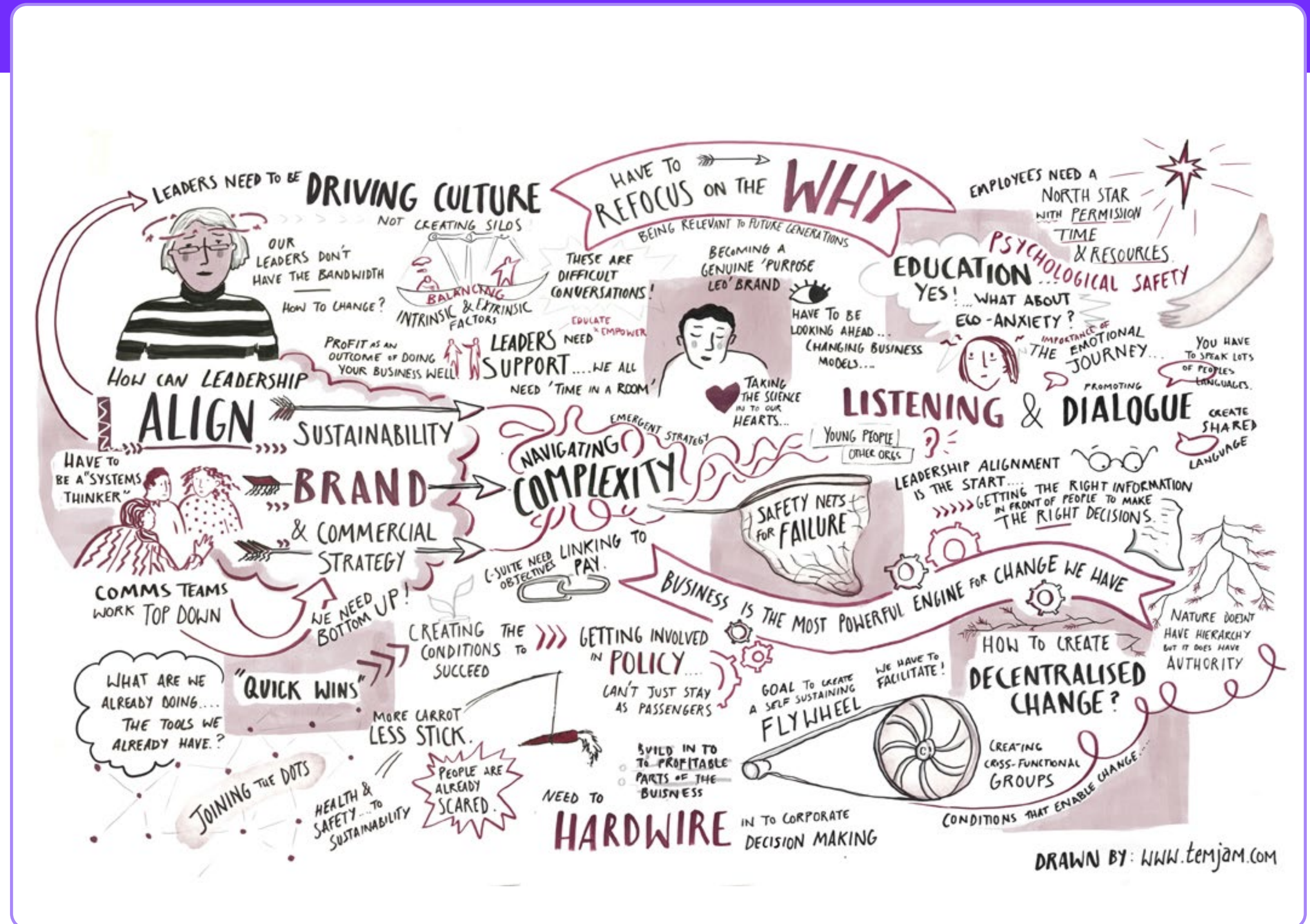
LEADERSHIP ALIGNMENT

How do we align leadership, brand, talent, and commercial strategy to deliver sustainable outcomes?

- Q Does every member of our executive team understand how delivering on our sustainability strategy will contribute to their success? Are they clear on the commercial risks of inaction?
- Q How do I facilitate decision-making by getting the right information to the right person at the right time? What are our governance processes, and the existing opportune moments to influence decision-making?
- Q Do our leadership team see sustainability as a siloed vertical? What do we need to do differently to change this?

“ At Ella’s, our ambition is to double our business while halving our carbon footprint. We can’t be afraid of linking our commercial and sustainability goals, or of committing to ambitious goals because we don’t know how to get there.

Will Howard
Chief Operating Officer, Ella’s Kitchen



AMBITION VS GREENWASHING

How do we lead courageously without greenwashing?

- Q How do we prioritise being bold in our targets and actions without jumping ahead to tell the story?
- Q What processes do we have to ensure our messaging is robust and transparent?
- Q Are we transparent about what isn't working and where we don't meet our targets as much as good news stories? Are we sharing our learnings openly?

“ To be a business of the future, sustainability has to be integral to your purpose. Being vocal about your ambition can open you up to scrutiny. Society needs business to be transparent about their success, but also what isn't working, and share their learning journey.

Ashley Allen,
Chief Sustainability Officer, Oatly



INSPIRING EMPLOYEES

How do you inspire action and drive change through employee action?

- Q How can we best help our employees connect our purpose and sustainability goals to their role? Is everyone clear on how their skills can contribute to progress?
- Q What are we doing to make sustainability part of everyone's role? Do we foster sustainable leadership mindsets in employees at every level?
- Q Do we give people the opportunity to share their ideas? And, do we give them agency to get involved with permission, time and reward?

“ Start with raising awareness; that in turn drives action and provides opportunities for leadership. That way you begin to create a culture of sustainability which can coalesce into a community of practice.

Sam Wright
Chief Operations Officer, My Green Lab



FUTURE PERSPECTIVES FROM FUTURE LEADERS

What is the role of business in delivering a sustainable future that is fair to future generations?

- Q How are you making leadership and decision-making democratic? Are you transparent in sharing how you make decisions, as well as the outcome?
- Q Do you educate your executive teams on how environmental and social issues will impact future generations? How do you make this education a habit, not a one off?
- Q Are you listening to those who don't look like you with an open mind and educating your people to recognise unconscious bias?

“ Inclusion of youth voices is a business super power that enables you to drive positive change and find innovative solutions. And, most importantly, provides a diversity of thought to break group think.

Celeste Leverton

Associate Director, Responsible Investing Manager, Coutts, and Junior Board Member, The Body Shop



DRAWN BY TEM & JONNY - WWW.TEMJAM.COM

* questions defined by leaders between 18 and 30

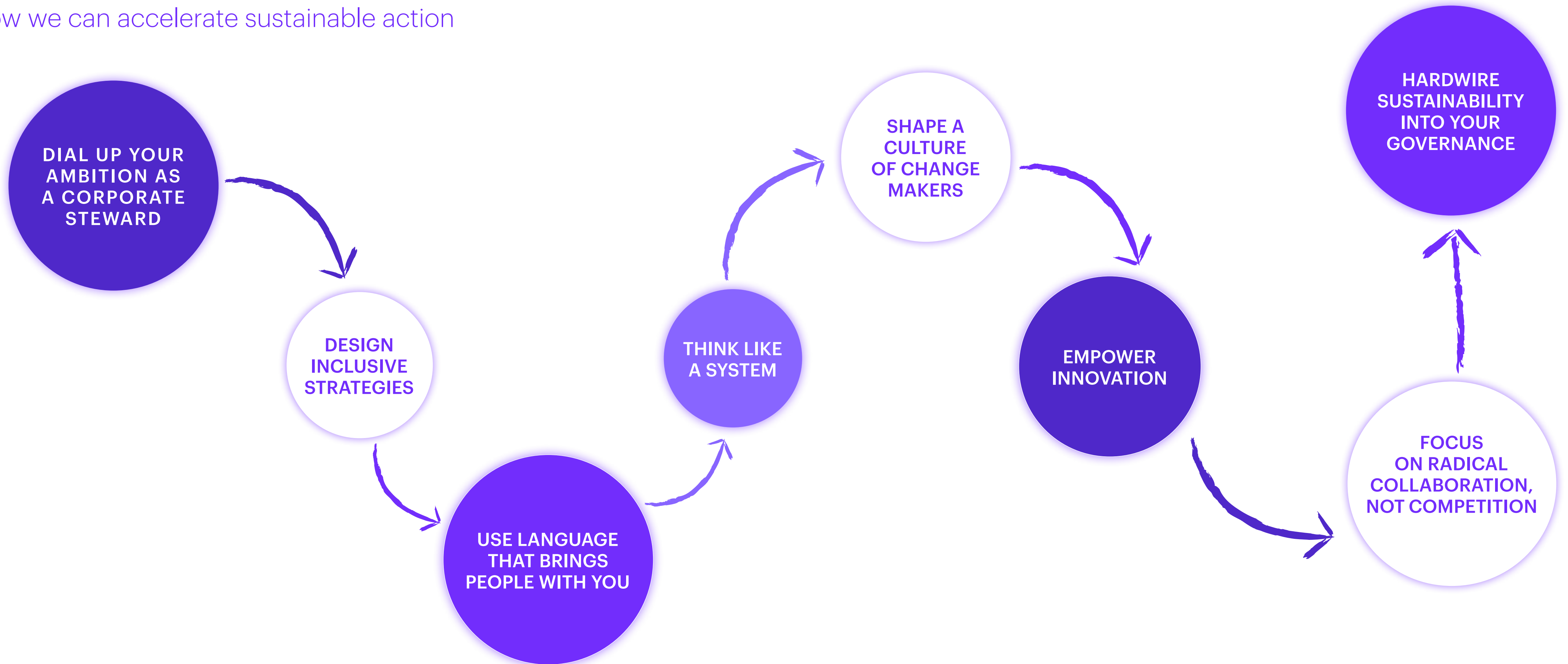
Levers for change

A set of pragmatic and high impact actions; designed for leaders, by leaders. From purpose and ambition to empowering a culture of change makers, these levers for change can be adopted by individuals in any role.



8 Levers for change

How we can accelerate sustainable action



Dial up your ambition as a corporate steward

“

Today’s systemic challenges call for transformative change; businesses need to radically dial up their ambition and recognize business as usual is not enough.

James Payne
Global Strategic Lead, Purpose of Business Forum for the Future

Don't try and solve everything. Focus on your organization's impact and where you can make the most difference.

Connect strategy, sustainability and science. Ensure they inform each other as well as your purpose and ambition.

Take a future back approach to strategy. Start with the sustainable future you want to shape and then design the strategy you need to get there.

Be clear on the opportunities arising from the sustainability agenda and how they create value for your business as well as for planet and society.

Consider what you need to stop doing or who you won't work with, as well as what you need to do more of.



Design inclusive strategies

“

Ask: “Who do you listen to?”, so you can understand what is required to ensure the future is not only environmentally sustainable but also genuinely inclusive, equitable, and just.

Sarah Gillard
CEO, A Blueprint for Better Business

Ask who isn't represented in the room when you make decisions and proactively seek their perspective.

Understand the intersectionality of systemic challenges. Do not focus on environment at the cost of society.

Have the courage to look at your organization's history and skeletons that might be in your closet. Use what you find to inform your strategy and approach.

Engage with future leaders and understand the impact of your decisions on future generations.

Use your platform to advocate for others especially those who don't have the same influence as you do.



Use language that brings people with you

“

For millennia, language and story telling have been our most powerful tools to communicate and pass information between generations. We must strive to find a common language that inspires action for a greener and more equitable shared future.

Joanna Bonnett

Head of Sustainability and Group Treasurer, PageGroup

Meet people where they are on their journey and speak their language, especially with people you need to persuade, like the board or finance team.

Avoid using overly technical language or making “acronym soup.”

Collect examples that cut through complexity, support your business case and accelerate understanding.

Remember that hope is motivating, while fear can be paralyzing. Be thoughtful in how you communicate the climate crisis and the scale of today’s challenges.

Showcase what is working and positive examples to inspire your people and remind them that change is possible.



Think like a system

“

Empower organizations to migrate from ‘do no harm’ mentality to becoming active citizens who participate in a collective effort to mobilize systems change.

Kurt Soderlund
CEO, Safe Water Network

Map your ecosystem and understand where you can make interventions to have maximum impact and ripple effect.

Cultivate an intrapreneurial mindset – think like a system, act like an entrepreneur.

We have the science, finance and innovation to solve today’s challenges – understand your role in enabling action, scaling innovation, and unlocking flows of capital.

Use your expertise to advocate for policies and regulation that unlock sustainable outcomes rather than hindering progress.

Work out where the energy is in your organization’s internal system. Look for hot spots to help you, and cold spots you can target.



Shape a culture of change makers

“

Empower your hidden superstars. Harness your energizers and influencers at every level to ensure communications, information and decisions have the greatest reach.

Beth Knight
Head of Community Investment for Europe, Amazon

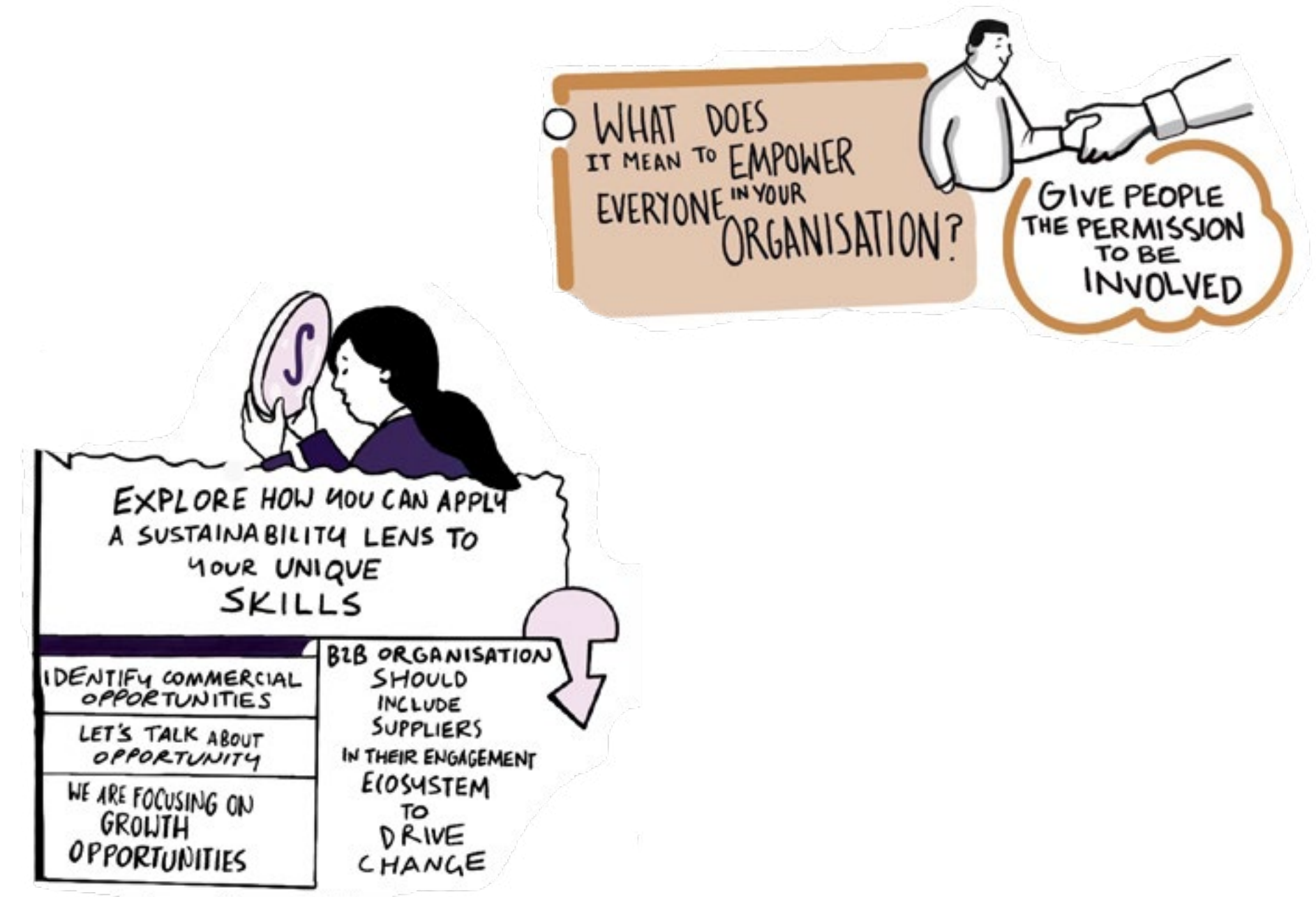
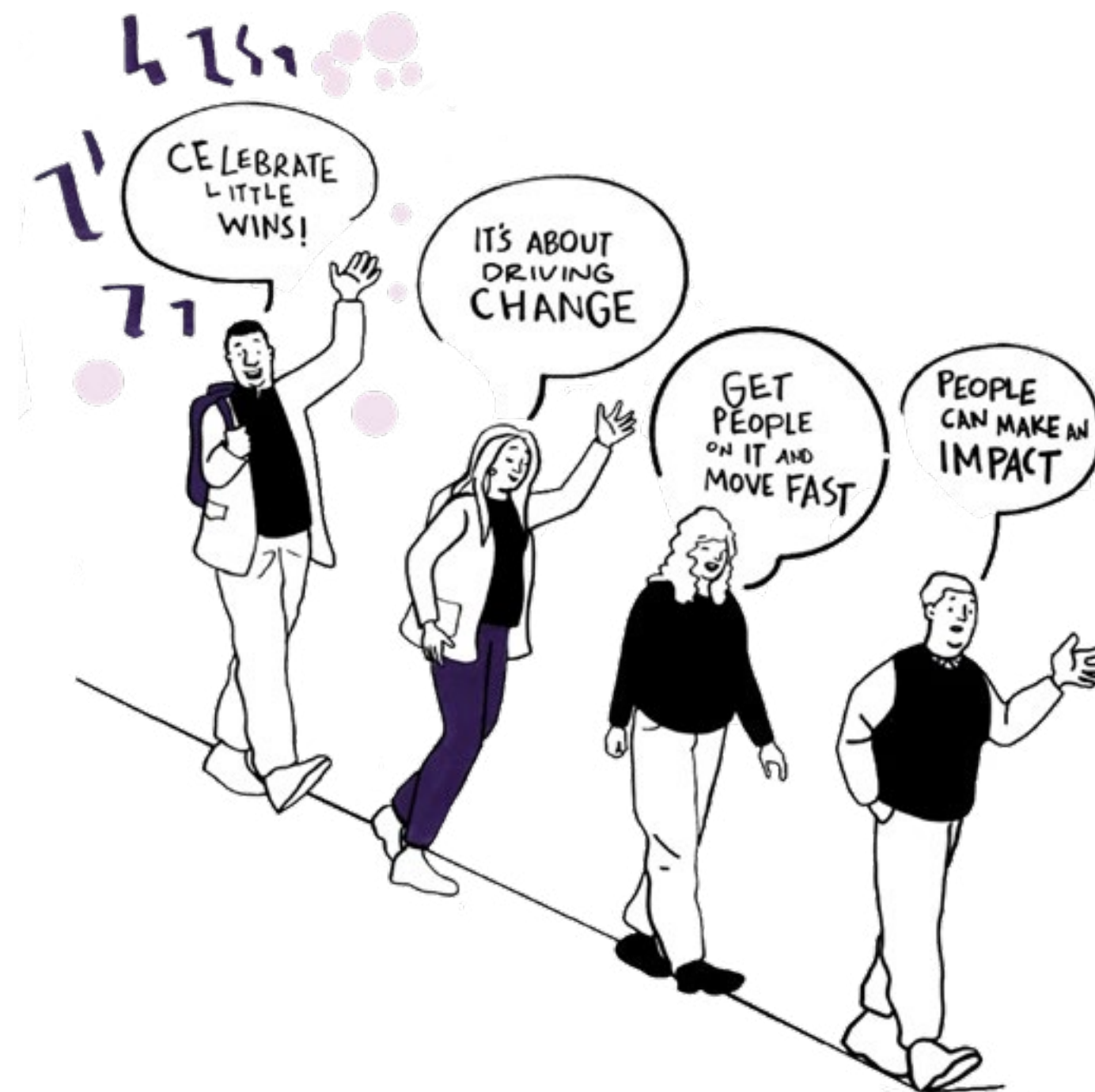
Take the time to connect purpose and sustainability to individual roles. Help everyone to understand both why it's important, and how they can make a difference.

Empower everyone to see sustainability as a lens they can apply to their existing expertise so that sustainability is part of everyone's job.

Give space and time for discussion and thinking, as well as education and awareness raising. Without this, sustainability topics and the scale of change needed can be overwhelming.

Take time to unpack barriers to change. Most barriers link back to culture or perception, and can be worked through.

Think of your supply chain as an extension of employees and include them in your engagement programmes. Harness your collective intelligence to leverage greater impact.



Empower innovation

“

Don't reject the whacky ideas, the world is built on whacky ideas.

Katie Hill
Policy Advisor
and Board Member, B Lab
Europe

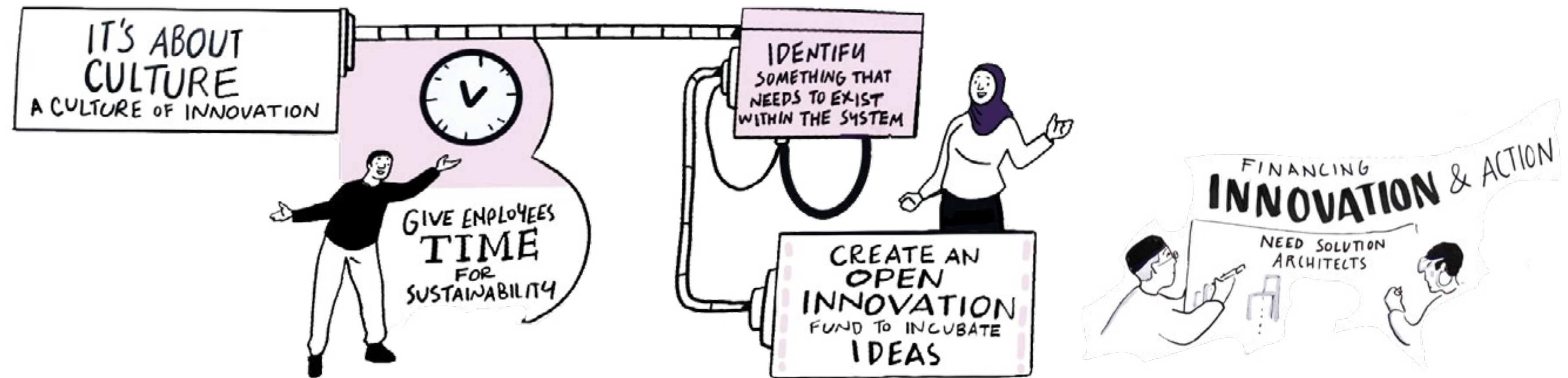
Recognize that delivering bold climate action will take bold business moves, and you need to take risks and finance innovation.

Redefine your relationship with failure; you won't get it right every time. Create safety nets and psychological safety for the owners of new ideas.

Empower everyone in your business to think of themselves as a designer and systems-thinker. Design is not limited to products, we need to apply sustainable design to services.

Create opportunities for your people to share ideas on more sustainable operations, goods and services, and engagement. Give agency, resource and budget to individuals who have ideas that will be taken forwards.

Where you lack buy-in, behave like a submarine. Pilot ideas under the radar and then pop up to share and scale success.



Focus on radical collaboration, not competition

“

Find problems and solve them; if you can't solve it, partner with someone who can.

Kresse Wesling CBE
Co-Founder & Director, Elvis & Kresse

Shift your mindset to being the best for the world instead of the best in the world. Be a trailblazer and pave the way for others rather than aiming to be in a category of one.

Make your successes open sourced and be courageous in sharing learnings from your failures.

Reflect on your response to the pandemic. There are lessons on how to respond to the climate crisis with speed and at scale through collaboration.

Collaborate with your competitors to drive systems change.

Work with momentum, understand who is driving change in your field and which movements you can support. Where there are gaps, what do you need to start?



Hardwire governance

“

Boards need to make sure there are plans beyond pledges. We need integration across all operations -finance, risk, HR, sales and marketing - to break out of silos, and make sure we have alignment of culture and decision-making.

Oonagh Harpur
Independent Non-Executive and Member,
Public Interest Committee, KPMG U.K. LLP

To meet today's challenges, we need targets that are so bold, we won't always know how to get there. To be credible, these must be underpinned with clear interim targets and concrete commitments to actions.

Be transparent on your performance internally and externally. Talk about what went well and what is not going as well.

Demonstrate top level commitment and accountability with executive remuneration linked to sustainability targets.

Engage the finance team to develop new success metrics for your sustainability strategy. Demonstrate commercial and sustainable value creation

Make sure reporting and communication channels facilitate dialogue between your executive team, board, employees, and investors.

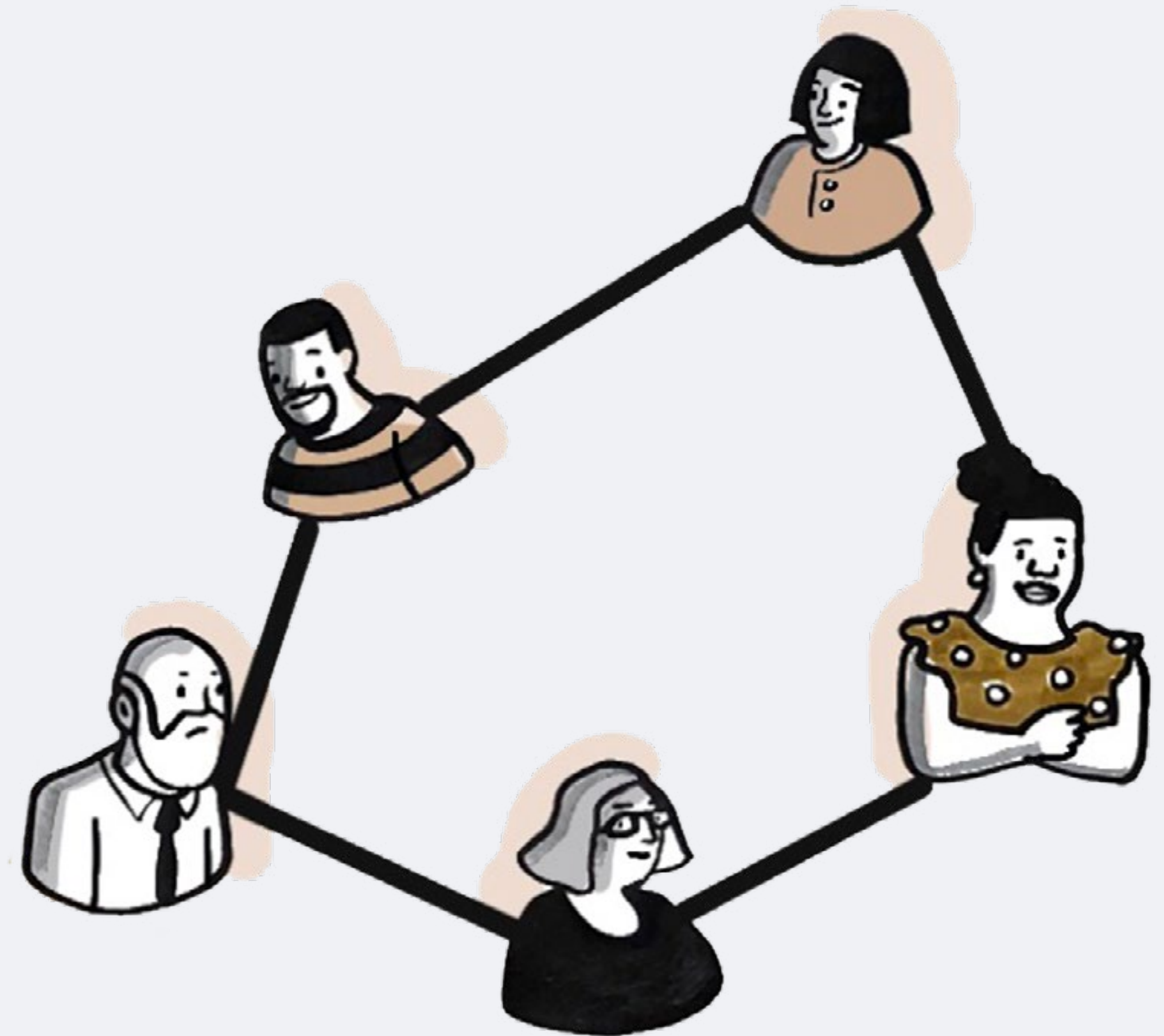


NEED TO HARDWIRE IN TO CORPORATE DECISION MAKING



Leadership traits

It isn't only what we do, it is also about how we show up as change makers. These are the traits we heard leaders describe as powerful enablers of action.



Leadership traits



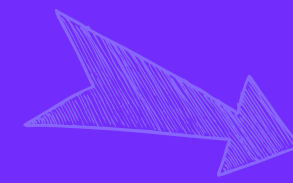
Is courageous in dialling up ambition and action in their work.



Always listens first, dropping their ego to empower the success of others.



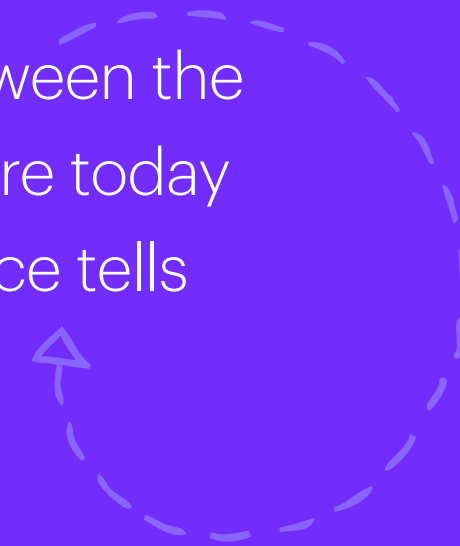
Is able to be vulnerable and share openly and honestly about the challenges of being a change-maker.



Mixes science and creativity.

Is committed to communicating complexity simply and giving clarity and focus to others.

Acts as a bridge between the reality of where we are today and where the science tells us we need to be.



Is a pragmatic optimist.

Finds their own community of change-makers for inspiration and collective problem-solving, as well as a source of support and resilience.

Draws inspiration from nature and living systems; builds regenerative organizations and mindsets.



Hosting your own sustainable leadership roundtable

We have built this playbook on the principle that the best way to accelerate sustainable action is through community, conversation and co-creation.



We believe dialogue alone is not enough and that we must focus on generating insights that lead to action.

The questions, levers for change, and traits have been generated through a series of leadership roundtables bringing together individuals with a responsibility (or desire to) lead sustainable outcomes.

If you would like to host your own roundtable, here is the format that we have followed for the past year.

Preparation

Decide on the sustainability challenge you want to tackle.

Set a bold question that will enable you to explore the issue. Be specific on where you would like to focus the discussion; we normally set two generative sub-questions.

Curate your guest list. We recommend having 12 – 15 people in the room, with a mix of sectors, functions and organizations. Be inclusive in your approach.

Format for the day

Our dialogues have been 1hr 30 minutes with a 30 minute breakfast before and 30 minute networking coffee after.

Context: set up the big question – 5 minutes.

Introductions: ask everyone why they have joined the session – 15 minutes.

Breakout session for the first question: 20 minutes discussion in groups. 10 minutes feedback.

Breakout session for the second question: 20 minutes group discussion, 10 minutes plenary feedback.

10 minutes wrap up conversation.

Facilitating a generative discussion

Create space for everyone to speak and respect diversity of thought.

Follow Chatham House rules to encourage open and honest sharing.

Focus on what can be done, and steer an action- and solution-orientated dialogue.

Beware of rabbit holes and help keep the conversation on track.

Close with commitment; ask everyone to capture one small action they will take as a result of your roundtable.

Do you need help connecting your organization's unique skills to today's sustainability challenges?

BRANDPIE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

- Connecting your organization's purpose to sustainability.
- Aligning your leadership team around the sustainability agenda.
- Creating a culture of change makers.
- Designing a strategy using the levers of change to unlock impact.

Get in touch if you would like to partner with us on a roundtable for our '23-'24 sustainable leadership series.

To begin your transformation journey, please contact:



Louisa Harris
Head of sustainability and systems change,
Brandpie
louisa.harris@brandpie.com



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PURPOSE POWERS PROGRESS