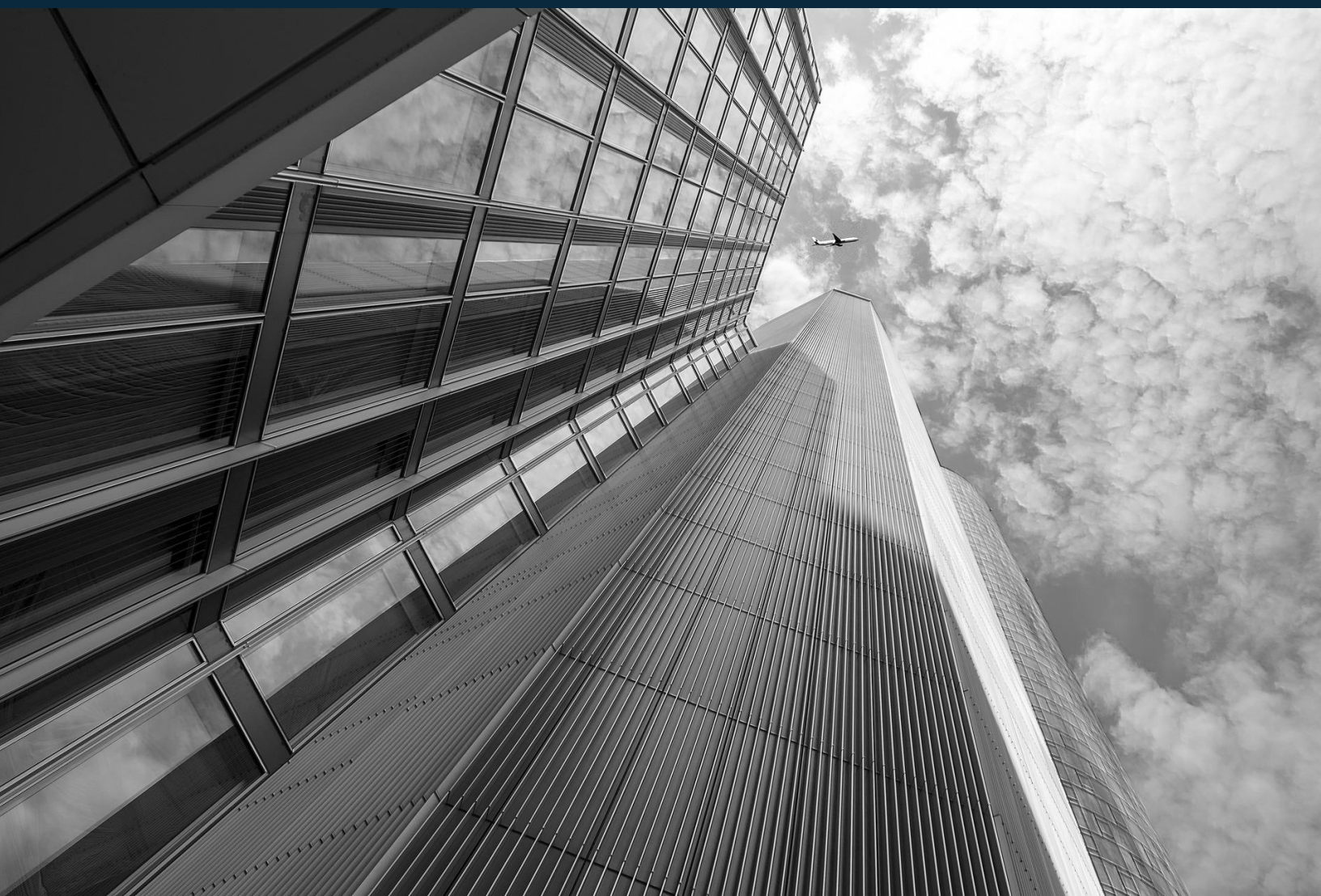


PURPOSE TRENDS REPORT

A selection of what has been published about Purpose in April 2022



April 2022

Florez-Jimenez, M.P. & Lleó, A.
School of Economics and Business. University of Navarra

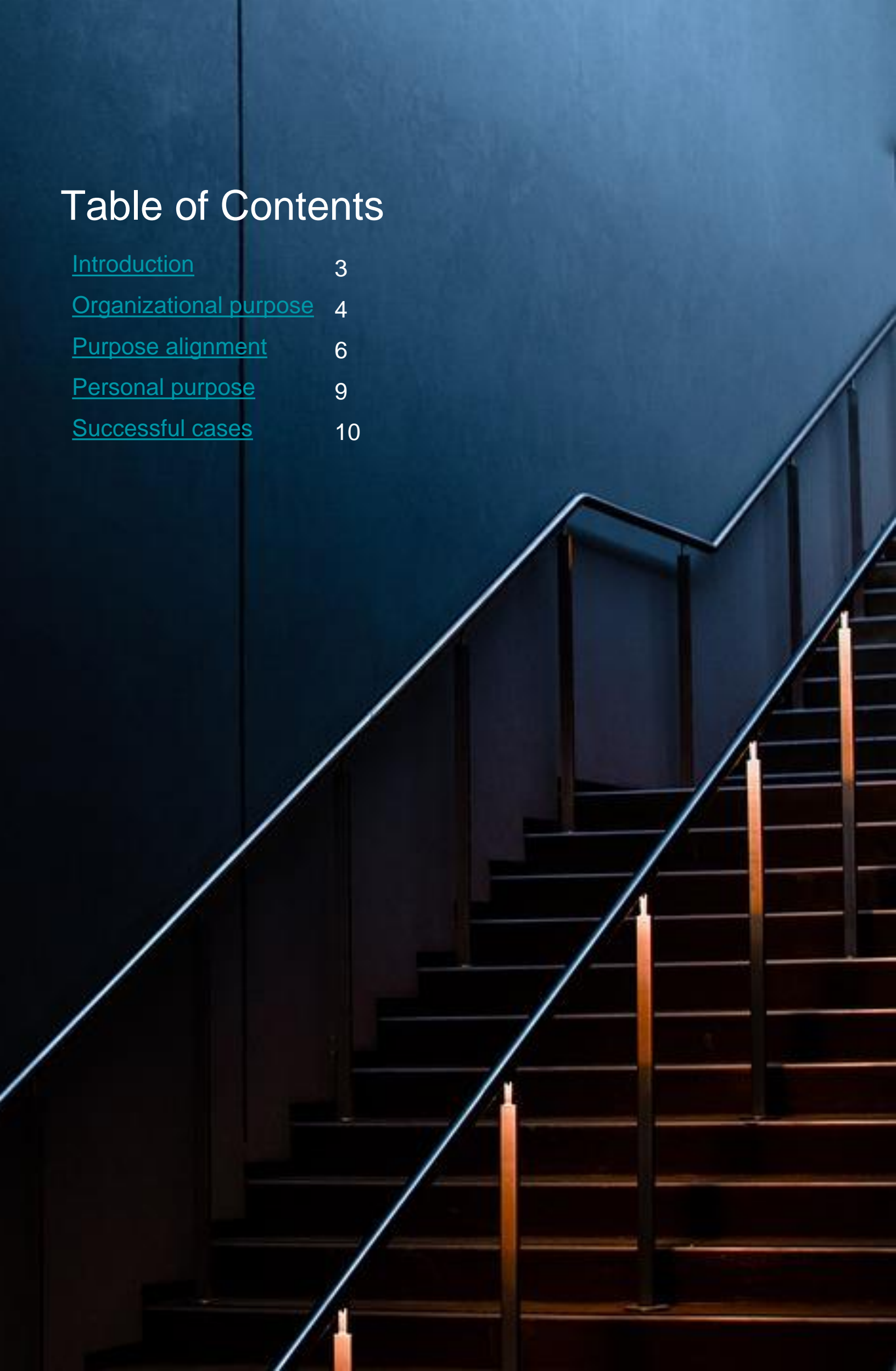
Purpose Trends Report ISSN 2952-1157
<https://doi.org/10.15581/025.2022.004>



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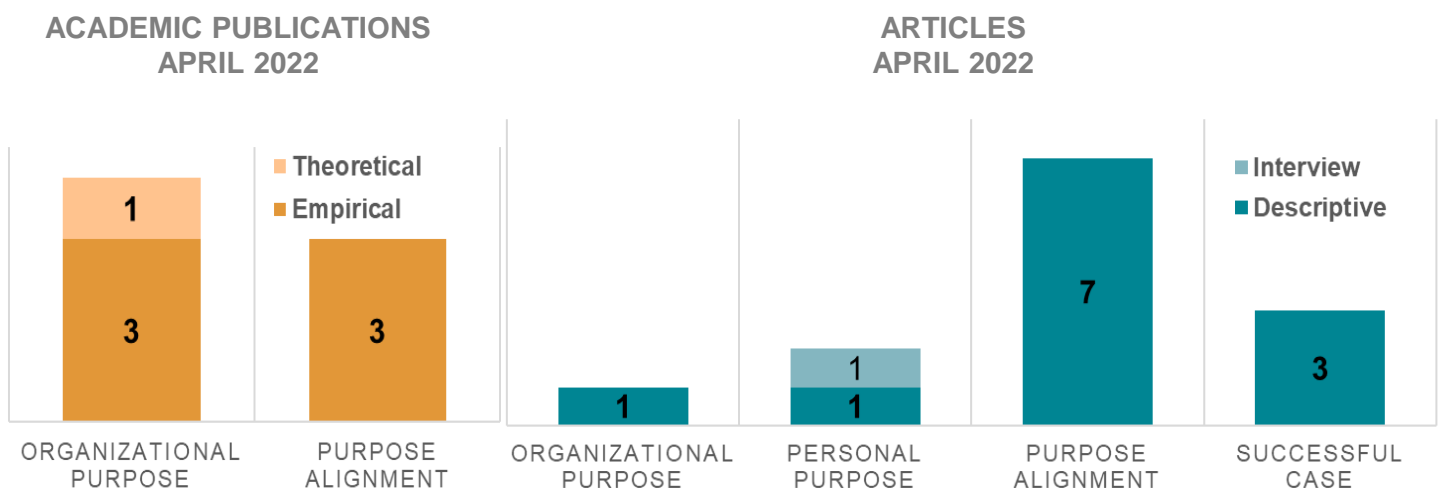
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INTRODUCTION

In this report, we want to synthesize the most relevant about corporate purpose published in April 2022. For this aim, we did a content search (using selected keywords) in Scopus and Google Scholar for academic publications; and diffusion magazines and other trusted sites for articles. We selected relevant publications about organizational purpose, purpose alignment, and personal purpose. Also, we include some successful cases of corporate purpose implementation. Bellow, we present statistics about the selected literature.



Some academic and article publications define purpose as a reason for being. They sustain that a purpose provides organizations with a sense of direction, helping them make decisions and solve problems.

Additionally, both academic publications and articles mention that the organization's purpose can complement an individual's purpose by giving them a sense of contribution. Some articles argue that managers have an essential role in the above; they can help their employees feel that they contribute positively to the world. An academic publication validates the importance of leadership in the employees' behavior.

Some references state that a purpose motivates the whole company, facilitating the will of cooperation necessary for the company to achieve its ends. Some articles propose that a sense of purpose at work creates connection and belonging. Some academic publications validate the motivational impact of the organizational mission.

This report highlights the Purpose Strength Index and the Social Purpose Assessment Tool, two tools to measure how purpose is embedded across the organization. Finally, it describes the case of Sempra, one company that has implemented corporate purpose.

Academic publications (4)

Factors influencing the implementation of an integrated corporate sustainability and business strategy

Journal of Cleaner Production, JCR Q1, [see online](#)

Abstract: Many companies consider sustainability issues important and have separate corporate sustainability and business strategies. However, many companies fail to combine business success and the advancement of sustainable development. This paper presents the integrated strategy perspective, which refers to a business strategy aligned with sustainability principles and aiming to solve global sustainability challenges relevant for the company. Through an integrated strategy, a company can advance sustainable development while doing business. An in-depth case study was conducted to explore the factors influencing an integrated strategy implementation process in a global horticulture company during 2020–2021. The identified factors are organization-related and employee-related success conditions, internal and outward activities advancing implementation, and market-related conditions. The findings were synthesized into a conceptual framework for conditions and activities influencing the implementation of an integrated strategy. The objective is for other companies to be able to use the findings as guidelines when implementing their integrated strategy in practice and to avoid some of the pitfalls that have formerly led new sustainability strategies to fail.

Green Transformational Leadership and Employees' Taking Charge Behavior: The Mediating Role of Personal Initiative and the Moderating Role of Green Organizational Identity

International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, JCR Q1
[see online](#)

Abstract: The green transformation of organizations requires employees not only to achieve environmentally friendly workflows within their duties, but also to go beyond their own current work and take personal initiative to realize the organizational goals. Employees' taking charge behavior is a type of extra-role behavior that influences organizational change through constructive efforts. How can leaders increase employees' environmental responsibility and efficiently promote their taking charge behaviors to help organizations make green changes? Based on self-determination theory and related research on green transformational leadership, this study explores the mechanisms and boundary conditions of how green transformational leadership influences employees' taking charge behavior. Data were obtained through two-stage questionnaire surveys from 429 employees in Chinese manufacturing enterprises. The results show that green transformational leadership has a significantly positive impact on employees' taking charge behavior and that personal initiative plays a mediating role. Furthermore, green organizational identity moderates the positive influence of green transformational leadership on employees' personal initiative, and consequently, their taking charge behavior. These findings have theoretical implications for the green transformational leadership literature and managerial implications for practitioners.

Purpose in Corporate Governance: The Path towards a More Sustainable World

Sustainability, JCR Q2, [see online](#)

Abstract: In order to give a more realistic view of how ESG and sustainability are developed in organisations, this paper explores the development of purpose in corporate governance and the challenges faced. The theme is analysed at the intersection between stakeholder theory and business models in two dimensions: the capability of the market to align stakeholders' interests (invisible hand) and the trade-offs between purpose and profit. The analysis conducted gave rise to four scenarios with a range of theoretical and practical implications focused on corporate governance.

Leveraging the organizational mission statement to communicate identity, distinctiveness and purpose to primary and secondary stakeholders during COVID-19

Journal of Strategy and Management, JCR Q3, [see online](#)

Abstract: Purpose: This study examines comprehensiveness and responsiveness of mission statements for the top 100 retailers on the 2020 National Retailers Federation list in order to (1) evaluate how effectively they communicate organizational identity, values and purpose, (2) underscore a distinctive commitment to stakeholders and (3) what extent these efforts are reflected in revised mission statements or addenda to meet global pandemic challenges. Design/methodology/approach: The study employs a 4-question metric to measure comprehensiveness and a two-pronged qualitative method of analysis consisting of keyword searches followed by content analysis. Findings: Retailer statements are considerably comprehensive in describing purpose and audience yet very few articulate stakeholder value, differentiate themselves as distinctive or substantively reaffirm their core mission and values. Retailers seem more invested in strategic communication around diversity, equity and inclusion, based on web content in their consumer, job seeker and investor touchpoints. Research limitations/implications: Coding and interpreting language through content analysis methods may introduce some level of subjectivity, particularly when dealing with unstructured data. Implications for how organizations acclimated in order to survive and thrive, while maintaining focus on stakeholders and strategy. Examining organizational mission statements and their contexts yields perspective into how organizations define themselves and what they do during times of crisis. Originality/value: This study provides insights into the content, structure and functions of the statements against a specific comprehensiveness metric and reveals patterns about the texts and their contexts during a pandemic and strong cultural and societal movements.

Articles (1)

Any Road Will Take You There, If You Don't Know Where (or Why) You're Going: Defining Purpose

Carol Cone, Sustainable Brands, [see online](#).

It sightlines the importance of having a shared understanding of what “purpose” means in your organization to gain its most significant benefits. It offers an up-to-date glossary for responsible business professionals.

Academic publications (3)

Health Care and Community-Based Organization Partnerships to Address Social Needs: Medicare Advantage Plan Representatives' Perspectives

Medical Care Research and Review, JCR Q1, [see online](#)

Abstract: Payers and providers are increasingly being held accountable for the overall health of their populations and may choose to partner with community-based organizations (CBOs) to address members' social needs. This study examines the opportunities and challenges that health care entities, using Medicare Advantage (MA) plans as an example, encounter when forming these relationships. We conducted interviews with 38 representatives of 17 MA organizations, representing 65% of MA members nationally. Transcripts were qualitatively analyzed to understand overarching themes. Participants described qualities they look for in community partners, including an alignment of organizational missions and evidence of improved outcomes. Participants also described challenges in working with CBOs, including needing an evidence base for CBOs' services and an absence of organizational infrastructure. Results demonstrate areas where CBOs may target their efforts to appeal to payers and providers and reveal a need for health care entities to assist CBOs in acquiring skills necessary for partnerships.

Mission, Motivation, and the Active Decision to Work for a Social Cause

Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, JCR Q2, [see online](#)

Abstract: The mission of a job affects the type of worker attracted to an organization but may also provide incentives to an existing workforce. We conducted a natural field experiment with 246 short-term workers. We randomly allocated some of these workers to either a prosocial or a commercial job. Our data suggest that the mission of a job has a performance-enhancing motivational impact on particular individuals only, those with a prosocial attitude. However, the mission is very important if it has been actively selected. Those workers who have chosen to contribute to a social cause outperform the ones randomly assigned to the same job by about half a standard deviation. This effect seems to be a universal phenomenon that is not driven by information about the alternative job, the choice itself, or a particular subgroup.

BOOK

Management by Missions

Palgrave Macmillan, [see online](#)

“
The purpose of an organization can complement and create synergy with an individual's purpose by giving them a greater sense of contribution and fulfillment through their daily work.
”

Articles (7)

5 Principles of Purposeful Leadership

Hubert Joly, Harvard Business Review [see online](#)

It highlights that both individual and collective purposes are at the business's heart. It sustains that for the corporate purpose to be successful, leaders themselves must first be clear about what drives them and the people around them.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): How To Ensure Impact For All Shareholders

Heather V. MacArthur, Forbes, [see online](#)

It argues the importance of identifying a purpose, which means answering the question about whom is the company helping and why does it matter? Once a company identifies its purpose, the more focused employees can be on what they bring to their managers and leaders. With a clear purpose, leaders do not have to explain to employees every decision the company takes.

Engaging Teams In Purposeful, Value-Driven Work

Anand Inamdar, Forbes [see online](#)

It sustains that the purpose helps organizations inspire their workforce to achieve something great. Purposeful employees perform better across the board, stay loyal to their organizations, and build camaraderie. It proposes some shifts that organizations can trigger or address in order for their workforce to be more engaged.

“

A purposeful workforce benefits organizations and their employees alike. It helps employees think of finding better ways to solve problems when current solutions are not working. They can be more efficient with their time so that they can focus on the aspects that speak to them.

”

In A Competitive Workforce, Companies Must Ensure Employee Connection And Belonging

Andrew Dawson, Forbes, [see online](#)

It states that a key tenet of any culture initiative is making sure employees feel like they belong in the company culture. It shares some of the best practices to foster a sense of connection and belonging: (1) define values, (2) show them in action, (3) communicate constantly, and (4) recognize excellence.

The Surging Value Of Corporate Purpose

Ashu Goel, Forbes, [see online](#).

It explains how purpose is becoming a key differentiator for customers and employees. Hence, the need for it to be articulated and tangible through concrete actions. It highlights that purpose can help guide actions, impact decisions, create direction, give meaning and add value.

“

There are many factors behind corporate success or failure, but purpose is becoming a key differentiator for customers and employees. If they want to maximize their company's potential value, executives need to spend more time examining and articulating their purpose.

”

Transcendence: The Basis Of Your Company's Social Purpose

Radhika Duggal, Forbes, [see online](#)

It sustains that most consumers crave a sense of purpose and make their purchase decisions based on companies' shared sense of purpose. It suggests some actions to position products and services to help consumers meet the need for transcendence and, therefore, create long-term brand loyalty.

Why Personal Purpose Matters To Employees And How To Help Them Find It

Ursula Morgenstern, Forbes, [see online](#)

It sustains that young workers want to work for a company that positively impacts society and fuels their personal purpose. It suggests five ways leaders can help employees develop a stronger connection between their work and a purpose they can feel passionate about.



Articles (2)

How Leaders Can Help Employees Live Their Purpose At Work

Carrie Freeman, Forbes, [see online](#)

It sightlines that organizations and societies can only truly thrive if everyone can live their purpose. It gives suggestions to help employers create an environment that helps employees live their purpose and be their best selves.

Leading With Purpose Is The Key To Environmental, Social And Governance Success

Glenn Llopis, Forbes, [see online](#)

It sustains that the way to make sure ESG priorities are genuine and ESG activities are effective is if they are shaped and driven by people leading with purpose. It lists skills and tools for leaders to cascade the purpose throughout organizations.

“

In terms of what skill leaders need right now – maybe they don't actually need to be good managers. Maybe they need to be good purpose-finders.

”

Bill Hulseman



Articles (3)

Sempra Announces 2021 Corporate Sustainability Report

SEMPRA [see online](#) & [see online](#)

“Provide leadership to the global energy transition by helping to enable electrification and decarbonization in every market we serve”

The company helps to address the issue of energy access for those living in energy poverty. They consider sustainability crucial for strategy, capital allocation, and sustained performance. In its 2021 Corporate Sustainability Report, the company shows examples of its sustainable business practices, including its management of environmental, social, and governance risks and opportunities to drive performance improvements. The company highlights its effort to benefit all its stakeholders with this behavior.

Purpose Strength Index, el primer indicador para activar y medir el propósito corporativo

RSE, [see online](#)

During four years of research, more than 10,500 managers and employees of 50 companies in 11 countries have been evaluated. The previous has made it possible to evaluate: (1) The impact of the different levers and dimensions in the implementation and use of the purpose, (2) The effects at the individual and collective level, adequate the main levers that drive it, and what conditions enhance its establishment. The Purpose Strength Index has been developed, an indicator to activate and measure the corporate purpose based on the balance and intensity of three key dimensions: knowledge, contribution, and internalization.

The Purpose Gloves Are Off: How to Not End Up on the Ropes

Coro Strandberg, [see online](#)

The United Way Social Purpose Institute offers the Social Purpose Assessment Tool to help companies assess and rate the degree to which their purpose is fully embedded across the company and in its relationships. It is a guideline and set of best practices that enable company benchmarking, offering guidance on how to become an authentic social purpose company. It includes 25 practices across the following: purpose, values, and strategy; governance and leadership; people and culture; operations; customer experience and marketing; business ecosystem; monitoring and reporting.

