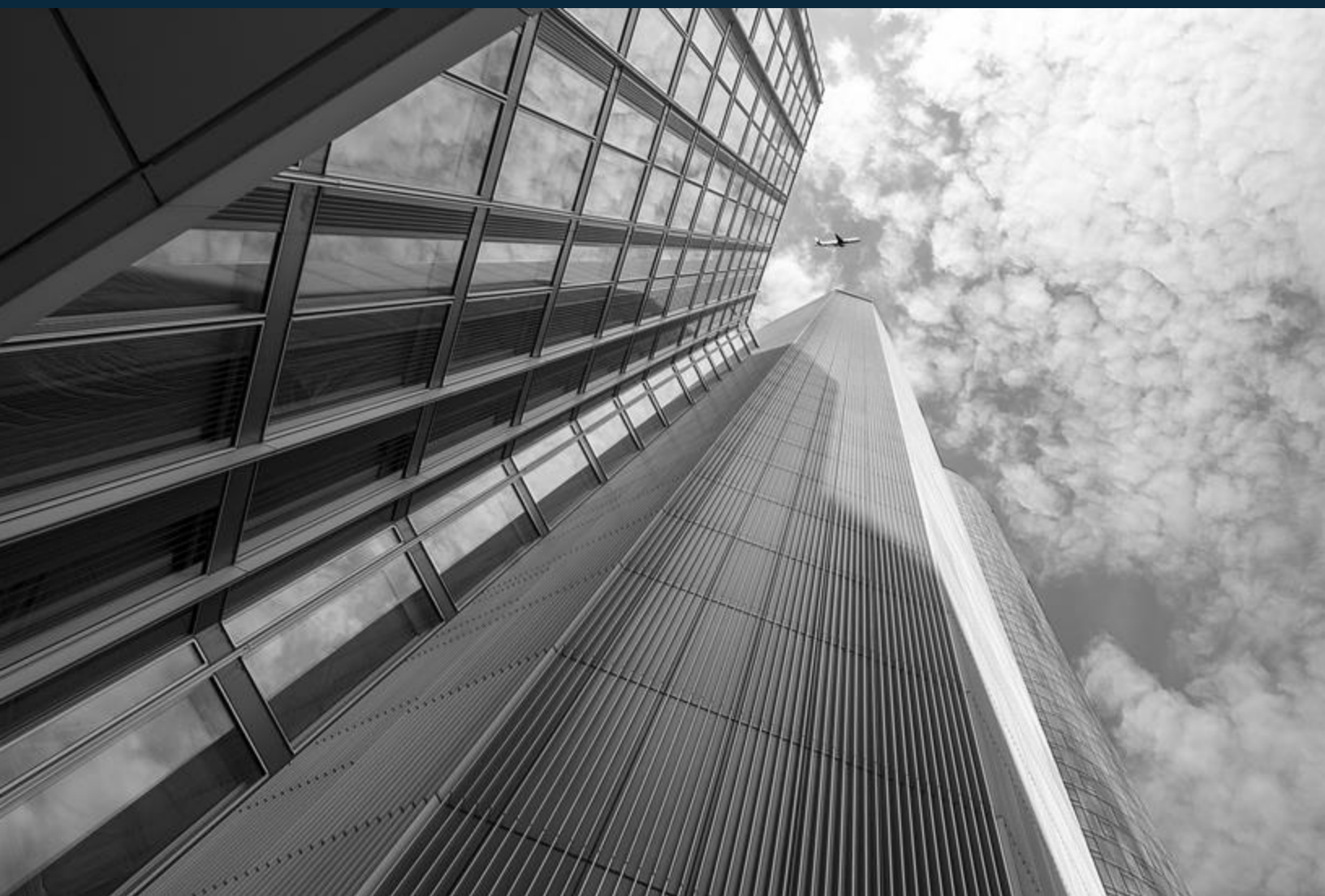


# PURPOSE TRENDS REPORT

A selection of what has been published about Purpose in August 2024



**August 2024**

Garcia, T.; Florez-Jimenez, M.P. & Lleo, A.  
School of Economics and Business. University of Navarra

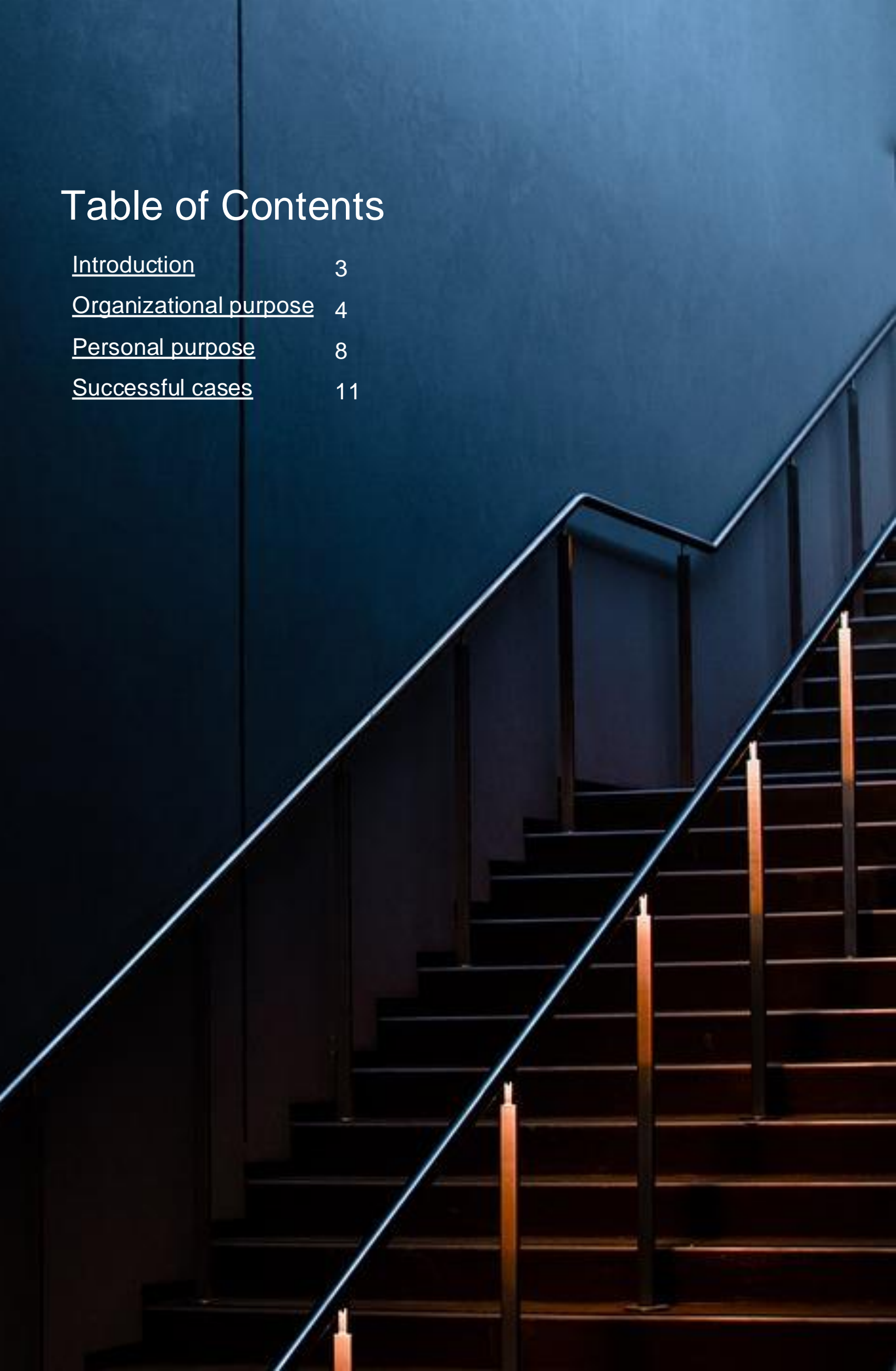
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**Universidad  
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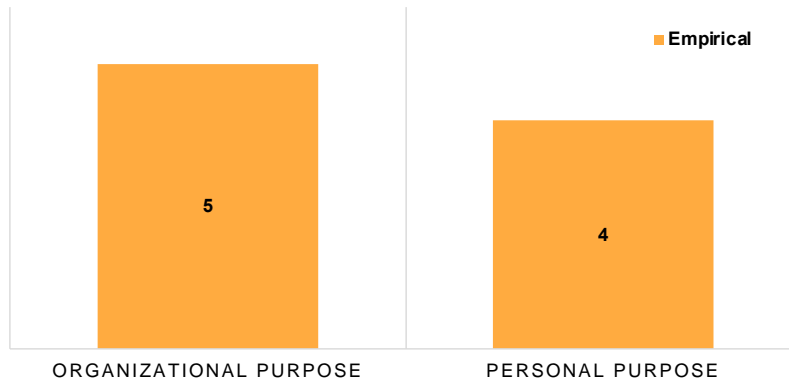
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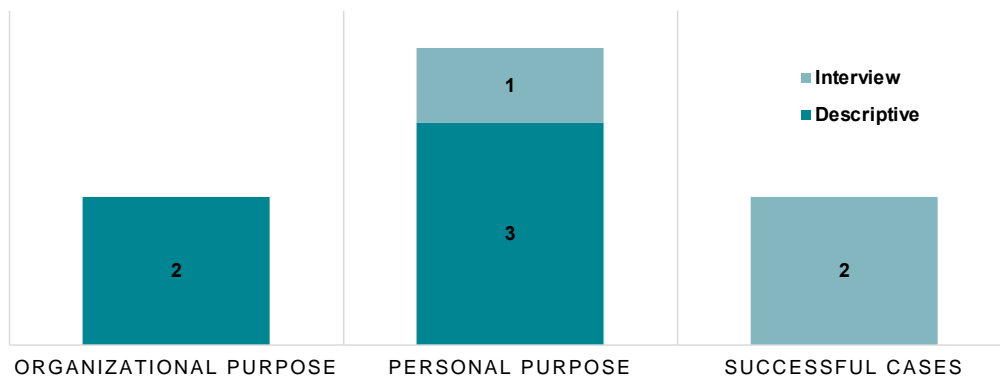
# INTRODUCTION

*In this report, we want to synthesize the most relevant about corporate purpose published in August 2024. 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 and reports. We selected relevant publications about organizational purpose and personal purpose. Also, we include successful cases that show how corporate purpose has been implemented. Below, we present statistics about the selected literature.*

## ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS - AUGUST 2024



## ARTICLES AND REPORTS - AUGUST 2024



*Recent academic research underscores the critical role of organizational purpose in shaping corporate identity and reputation. Studies reveal that a strong corporate identity, supported by values like empowerment and inclusivity, directly influences reputation and indirectly affects organizational success. Purpose-driven branding is increasingly significant, with authentic engagement in socio-political issues enhancing brand credibility. Conversely, "woke washing" diminishes credibility. Articles reflect these findings by noting a shift from ESG goals to "corporate patriotism," highlighting a growing need for genuine commitment to purpose amidst evolving political and economic pressures.*

*Further, understanding personal purpose at work reveals its profound impact on job satisfaction and retention. Research highlights gender differences in preferences for meaningful work and its influence on career choices. Studies in social work and healthcare show that meaning at work significantly enhances job satisfaction and reduces turnover. Articles build on this by suggesting practical strategies for maintaining joy and purpose, such as aligning work with personal passions and leveraging AI for self-discovery, demonstrating how personal purpose can drive professional fulfillment and resilience.*

*Finally, successful examples of purpose-driven organizations showcase the benefits of integrating purpose into business strategies. Leaders like Claire Hawkins emphasize that aligning corporate identity with societal impact enhances reputation and value. Xerox's approach under Steve Bandrowczak, which links tasks to a broader purpose, exemplifies how purpose-driven leadership boosts employee engagement and success.*

## *Academic publications (5)*

### **Corporate identity management: A study of employees' perceptions in the context of the retail and the hospitality and tourism sectors**

International Journal of Hospitality Management, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

**Abstract:** This research delves into the evolving landscape of corporate identity and its interplay with corporate reputation. To construct a relevant corporate identity scale, we relied on the existing literature and conducted comprehensive interviews with personnel in the hospitality and tourism, and retail sectors. We then gathered survey responses from 690 individuals in hospitality and tourism, and 649 in retail, to evaluate the corporate identity scale's dimensions and its link to corporate reputation. Our findings validate the proposed model, highlighting that corporate reputation is significantly shaped by various facets of corporate identity. Notably, empowerment directly influences corporate reputation, while elements like corporate purpose, strategy, culture, and a climate fostering inclusion and diversity have an indirect impact. The study underscores the importance of cultivating an inclusive, supportive workplace that prioritizes employee well-being and empowerment, thus underscoring employees' pivotal role in enhancing an organization's reputation.

### **Act as you preach! Authentic brand purpose versus “woke washing’s” impact on brand credibility: The moderating role of cause involvement and consumer skepticism**

Journal of Business Research, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

**Abstract:** An increasing number of brands are taking a stance on current socio-political issues such as climate change, racism, and LGBTQ discrimination, thereby adopting a purpose-driven branding approach. However, not all measures taken are authentic, with certain brands running the risk of being accused of “woke washing.” This experimental-based study, involving 278 participants and focusing on anti-racism, investigates whether the approach taken (authentic, woke washing, or neutral) impacts brand credibility. The results indicate that an authentic brand purpose positively affects brand credibility, whereas woke washing has a negative impact compared to a neutral approach. Furthermore, cause involvement and consumer skepticism moderate the relationship between the brand's purpose-driven approach and brand credibility. Greater cause involvement and/or consumer skepticism result in a more favorable assessment of brands with an authentic purpose-driven approach and a more negative perception of woke washing brands. This highlights the importance of brands aligning their actions with their stated values – that is, acting as they preach.

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Authentic purpose-driven branding occurs when a brand's explicit purpose and values align with its activist marketing messaging and pro-social corporate practices.

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## Overcoming the Challenges Faced by Leaders of Purpose-Led Medium-Sized Businesses: The Role of Corporate Communication and its Interplay with Corporate Reputation and Organisational Identity

Corporate Reputation Review, JCR Q3 [see online](#)

**Abstract:** Induced by worsening environmental conditions, pursuing purpose, not solely profit, now constitutes an ethical obligation for leaders of business organisations, towards future generations. Consequently, increasing numbers of businesses seek to become purpose-led (PLBs), but challenges exist. Despite the significant growth in PLB research since the turn of the millennium, attention has mainly focussed on multinational companies, although small- and medium-sized businesses (MSBs) hugely impact any economy. This research sets out to better understand the challenges faced by leaders of companies undergoing purpose-led MSB transitioning. Thematic analysis of the interview data from founders and leaders of B-Corp certified purpose-led MSBs revealed six specific challenges consistent with literature findings, but also provided uniquely useful insights from the leaders' perspectives. Integrated business strategies or solutions, which meet multiple challenges simultaneously, revolve around a strong corporate reputation and organisational identity driven by corporate communication. Corporate communication engages stakeholders, builds trust, reinforces reputation, and serves as a strategic intervention for differentiating purpose-led MSBs in the marketplace, shaping organisational identity. Overall, the work provides leaders of MSBs with a practical guide for navigating their challenges and developing leadership practices to enable purpose-led transformations.

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While pursuing a higher purpose can be fulfilling and inspiring, it also requires strong leadership, effective communication, and a culture that embraces and supports the organization's purpose to navigate various complexities.

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## Insights from the COVID-19 perspective on the necessity of corporate social responsibility in times of crisis in the context of Pakistan

PLoS ONE, SJR Q1 [see online](#)

**Abstract:** In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a notable increase in global awareness among businesses and consumers regarding environmental preservation and health concerns. The degree to which individuals identify with an organization is influenced by the appeal of its organizational identity, which aids in fulfilling important self-definitional needs. Nevertheless, there remains a limited understanding regarding the underlying factors that contribute to the phenomenon of firm identity attraction (IA) within the framework of consumer-business interactions. This study presents a validated framework that examines the antecedents of identity attraction, with COVID-19 being considered as a moderator. The framework is developed based on established theories of social identity and organizational identification. The study in Pakistan's cities utilized a questionnaire survey as its primary research method, while the findings were evaluated through the application of structural equation modelling. The results of our study indicate that the impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on firm Identity Attraction (IA) is significantly more pronounced. Although the impact of COVID-19 on the intention to purchase remains unaffected, it does play a favorable role in moderating the influence of CSR on the attraction towards brand.

“ Consumers are more inclined to be attracted to a brand when they perceive a congruity among the brand's values, personality, and image and their own self-concept. The alignment between the consumer's identity and the brand's identity fosters a feeling of resonance and relatability, resulting in heightened emotional attachments and increased brand loyalty. ”

## Organisational configurations explaining the entrepreneurial orientation–performance–environment relationship: a focus on bricolage capability, organisational identity and absorptive capacity

Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, SJR Q1 [see online](#)

**Abstract:** Wide-spread research demonstrates that firms which promote entrepreneurship are dynamic, flexible organisations which tend to realise greater innovation. The entrepreneurial orientation (EO)–firm performance relationship and its contingency factors remain an unresolved area of research in the literature. Recognising the centrality of knowledge and resource-based rationales within EO–performance theorising, we investigate the role of resources and capabilities in terms of bricolage capability, absorptive capacity, and organisational identity as potential moderators to the EO–performance–environment relationship. Primary data are sourced from firms in the South African construction and materials industry sector. After establishing validity and reliability through confirmatory factor analyses (CFA), hierarchical multiple linear regression was used to test the hypotheses. Results reveal that in the context of environmental hostility, the EO–performance relationship is positively moderated by the bricolage capability–organisational identity interaction. Moreover, absorptive capacity is positively moderated by organisational identity. Managers need to appreciate how various internal resources and capabilities could be orchestrated for optimum performance and how these could be complementary and consistent with EO–performance outcomes. The study findings provide novel research implications by increasing the theoretical and empirical reach of bricolage capability, absorptive capacity, and organisational identity as moderators in the EO–performance–environment relationship.

## Articles (2)

### **Patriotism is replacing purpose in American business**

The Economist [see online](#)

The article explains that the Business Roundtable's 2019 shift toward stakeholder-focused governance is weakening. It states that companies are reducing their focus on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals, driven by commercial rather than moral concerns. It argues that political pressure on big business is intensifying, with both Democrats and Republicans demanding corporate support for middle-class jobs and technological competition with China. It defends the idea that "corporate patriotism" is replacing ESG but warns that government intervention and lobbying risks weakening America's long-term competitiveness.

### **Stakeholder Capitalism Still Makes Business Sense**

Paul Polman & Andrew Winston, HBR [see online](#)

Five years ago, 181 CEOs issued a new statement on the purpose of a corporation, pledging to serve five stakeholders: customers, employees, suppliers, communities, and shareholders. but even then, it lagged behind what's needed. Their commitment mattered and drove progress. But more recently, especially in the U.S., enthusiasm for many stakeholders' sustainability priorities — such as climate change or DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) — has seemingly stalled. The authors reflect on what has happened since the statement, and where we're going. Ultimately, they argue, that given the stress on our largest natural and societal systems, we need accelerated action — deeper work to build better, more regenerative businesses — and bold, decisive leadership to ensure a sustainable and equitable future for all.



## *Academic publications (4)*

### **Gender Differences in Preferences for Meaning at Work**

American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

**Abstract:** Scholars have examined whether preferences for job characteristics help explain why men and women sort into different occupations but have overlooked preferences for meaning at work. We first document gender differences in preferences for meaning in a large-scale survey covering individuals in 47 countries. We then conduct a choice-based conjoint analysis of a cohort of MBA students at a leading business school to study gender differences in preferences for meaning compared to other job attributes. We show that gender differences in preferences for meaning at work are widespread and partly explain gender differences in behavioral outcomes, including industry of work.

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Results suggest that a larger proportion of the population may exhibit gender differences in preferences for meaning induced by social impact at work overtime, as the world's population becomes more educated and more developed.

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### **Factors Associated with Israeli Social Workers' Intention to Stay in the Profession**

Social Work (United States), JCR Q1 [see online](#)

**Abstract:** The phenomenon of social workers leaving the profession occurs frequently, underscoring the importance of understanding factors contributing to the intention to stay (ITS) in the profession. Based on the job demands–resources theory (JD-R), this study examined selected social worker workplace “demands” (i.e., their organizational sector of employment and level of work–family conflict) and “resources” (i.e., levels of meaning, locus of control, and salary satisfaction at work). Online survey data were obtained from 407 Israeli social workers. The findings showed that higher levels of meaning and salary satisfaction at work, greater professional seniority, and lower levels of work–family conflict were associated with greater ITS in the profession. Data were gathered during the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling examination of variables contributing to the ITS during times of crisis. These findings confirm that meaning at work is the main factor that motivates social worker ITS in the profession. Salary satisfaction was also found to be an essential factor, highlighting the recent escalation in social worker demands for fair compensation in Israel. Greater work–family balance also contributed to ITS. These findings should be considered by governmental decision makers and welfare service providers wishing to preserve this essential workforce, not just in Israel but also in other countries.



## Relationship between workplace spirituality with organization-based self-esteem and workplace deviant behaviors among Iranian nurses

BMC Nursing, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

**Abstract:** Background: Despite the numerous studies conducted on workplace spirituality, there is still lack of studies that have explored the relationship between workplace spirituality with organization-based self-esteem and workplace deviant behaviors. This study aims to examine the relationship between workplace spirituality with organization-based self-esteem and workplace deviant behaviors among Iranian nurses. Methods: 236 nurses from 5 hospitals participated in this descriptive, analytical, and cross-sectional study from August to December 2022. Data was gathered by four questionnaires: demographic information, workplace spirituality, organization-based self-esteem, and workplace deviant behaviors. The data were analyzed by SPSS 26 based on descriptive and inferential statistics (Independent Two-sample t Test, Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression). Results: Based on the findings, nurses had a moderate level of perception of workplace spirituality and organization-based self-esteem while having a low level of perception regarding the occurrence of workplace deviant behaviors. Results of Pearson correlation coefficient test showed a positive and statistically significant relationship between workplace spirituality and organization-based self-esteem. Additionally, there was an inverse and significant relationship between workplace spirituality and organization-based self-esteem with workplace deviant behaviors. Results of multiple regression analyses indicate that by controlling the demographic characteristics of nurses, the meaningful work and sense of community have a significant relationship with organization-based self-esteem. Furthermore, by controlling the demographic characteristics of nurses, permanent employment status, sense of community, alignment with the organization's values, and organization-based self-esteem have a significant relationship with workplace deviant behavior. Conclusions: The study suggests that organizations must prioritize promoting workplace spirituality and organization-based self-esteem to ensure a healthy work environment and prevent workplace deviant behaviors.

## Health care workers' self-perceived meaning of residential care work

BMC Health Services Research, JCR Q2 [see online](#)

**Abstract:** Background: Attracting and supporting a sustainable long-term care (LTC) workforce has been a persistent social policy challenge across the globe. To better attract and retain a sustainable LTC workforce, it is necessary to adopt a unified concept of worker well-being. Meaning of work is an important psychological resource that buffers the negative impacts of adverse working conditions on workers' motivation, satisfaction, and turnover intention. The aim of this study was to explore the positive meaning of care work with older people and its implications for health care workers' job satisfaction and motivation to work in the LTC sector. Methods: This study adopted a qualitative descriptive design that pays particular attention to health care workers; such as nurses, personal care workers; as active agents of the meaning making and reframing of care work in LTC communities in a East Asia city. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirty health care workers in LTC communities in Hong Kong. Thematic analysis was employed for data analysis. Results: The research findings indicate that while health care workers perform demanding care work and experience external constraints, they actively construct positive meanings of care work with older people as a helping career that enables them to facilitate the comfortable aging of older people, build affectional relationships, achieve professional identity, and gain job security. Conclusions: This qualitative study explores how health care workers negotiate the positive meaning of older people care work and the implications of meaningful work for workers' job satisfaction and motivation to work in the LTC sector. The importance of a culturally sensitive perspective in researching and developing social policy intervention are suggested.

## Articles (4)

### Finding Meaning and Making Impact in Corporate Roles with Lori Marcus



Robin L. Owens, The Leadership Purpose Podcast [listen online](#)

The podcast explains how Lori Marcus discovered that she could create a meaningful impact without leaving her corporate role. Lori, a speaker, coach, and advisor, uses her leadership expertise to help women reach their full potential. They talk about her book, *You Should Smile More*, which provides practical solutions for addressing gender bias and promoting inclusivity. She states that men play a crucial role as allies in fostering gender equity. Lastly, she defends the idea of a portfolio career as a flexible path to professional growth and personal fulfillment.

### Finding Joy as a Manager — Even on Bad Days

Daisy Auger-Domínguez, HBR [see online](#)

When work and life are overwhelming, it can be difficult to reclaim a sense of joy at work. Research has shown the benefits of incorporating joy, hope, and optimism into the workplace to combat burnout and improve well-being. The author recommends four strategies to reconnect with joy at work on your toughest days: 1) Find your why: Reconnect with your passion and purpose by aligning your work with what brings you joy, what you are good at, and what the world needs. 2) Embrace a beginner's mindset: Approach challenges with curiosity and openness, fostering a sense of wonder. 3) Sprinkle gratitude and joy like confetti: Actively recognize and celebrate contributions to build a supportive and cohesive team culture. 4) Fuel your joy: Maintain positive reminders and practice self-compassion to sustain energy and enthusiasm in your role.

### How To Handle Grief By Reconnecting With Purpose At Work

Kathy Miller Perkins, Forbes [see online](#)

The article explains that grief can deeply impact both personal and professional life, leading to emotional and cognitive challenges at work. It argues that reconnecting with purpose and meaning is essential for maintaining motivation. It states that reflecting on core values, setting small, meaningful goals, and finding new purpose in work can help individuals navigate grief. It also defends the importance of connecting with others and embracing flexibility. Ultimately, it argues that aligning work with personal growth can transform grief into a source of healing and resilience.

“ When grief disrupts our daily routines and dampens our motivation, embracing a sense of purpose in our work can serve as a beacon of hope, guiding us through the emotional fog and restoring our sense of direction. ”

### Can AI Help Us Find Meaning In Our Work?

Aditya Malik, Forbes [see online](#)

The article explains how AI can help employees find greater purpose in their work by facilitating self-discovery and aligning tasks with personal values. It states that AI can enhance creativity by automating mundane tasks and supporting innovation. It also defends the idea that human-AI collaboration, when embraced, leads to increased job satisfaction and performance. The article argues that ethical considerations are crucial as AI continues to evolve. Ultimately, it explores how AI can transform work into a more meaningful, purpose-driven experience.

## Articles (2)

### How to build corporate reputation through purpose with Claire Hawkins



Becky Willan, Given [listen online](#)

Corporate reputation is more important than ever. Potential customers are not only looking at the services an organization provides, but its public visual identity and how it makes a difference to society. But how do you build authentic corporate reputation through purpose and, in turn, create value? In this podctast, Becky Willan is joined by Claire Hawkins, Director of Corporate Affairs and Investor Relations at Phoenix Group, The UK's largest long-term savings and retirement business. In this conversation, they'll be discussing how to build corporate reputation by putting purpose at the heart of innovation and how to navigate the risks that come with using your voice to create change.



### Leading With A Sense Of Purpose: A Chat With Xerox's Steve Bandrowczak

Alexander Puutio, Forbes [see online](#)

The article explains that CEOs now face increased expectations to lead with purpose, fostering a sense of meaning and belonging among employees. It argues that societal shifts have placed more pressure on leaders to create value-driven cultures. Steve Bandrowczak, Xerox's CEO, exemplifies this by aligning corporate tasks with a broader purpose, ensuring employees understand their contributions. Similar to how Xerox transformed under his leadership, this approach reinforces the importance of purpose-driven work in boosting engagement and organizational success, linking tasks to meaningful impact beyond profit.



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Everybody wants to be helpful and feel like they have a useful role to play in something that is bigger than them.

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