



# PURPOSE

# UNDER PRESSURE

HOW ORGANIZATIONS CAN PULL THROUGH PURPOSE  
WITHOUT LEAVING ANYTHING ON THE TABLE

- ALLISON+ PARTNERS
-   
**HEADSTAND**  
TURNING THE AGENCY MODEL ON ITS HEAD
- CAROL CONE ON PURPOSE 
-  The Harris Poll





# DATA INTO ACTION

## NEXT STEPS FOR COMPANIES

### 1. MAKE PURPOSE SPECIFIC, PERSONAL AND AUTHENTIC:

With Purpose-washing and increased employee skepticism on the rise, it's important to ensure your Purpose is truly specific to what you do and what your organization can uniquely provide to the world. The more precise and "human" your Purpose is to the company, the more easily actionable and understood it is by employees.

### 2. USE PURPOSE AS A LENS FOR DECISION MAKING IN TIMES OF DISCORD:

Your company's Purpose is often put to test in moments of unexpected and surmounting external conditions such as mergers and acquisitions, regulatory issues, crises, and societal strife. Let your Purpose and values be the guide for your decisions and communications – remaining true to this will help ensure your employees believe in the authenticity of your purpose and truly demonstrate how you "walk the walk."

### 3. BUILD AUTHENTICITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH ESG:

Purpose and ESG are not always tangentially built nor delivered upon. Purpose can become your North Star and rallying cry – while ESG is how you deliver on it. This includes the programs, policies and goals that help to actualize your Purpose ambition in a concrete and actionable way. Both are critical to being authentic – not only in the eyes of employees, but also other stakeholders such as supply chain partners, customers, consumers, communities and shareholders.

### 4. ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS—SHOW IT OFTEN:

Don't just wait for external conditions to test your Purpose. Persistently focus instead on activating purpose into internal

policies, programs and internal communications to demonstrate how your Purpose comes to life with your employees each day. Seeing how peers act with Purpose in their own roles will reinforce your workforces' authentic connection to your Purpose and create reassurance, pride and loyalty among employees.

### 5. ALIGN PERSONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES:

More than ever, employees seek roles at organizations that have values that match their own. This means organizations must put those values front and center in the employee experience. This might manifest as weighing in on controversial issues or providing support to employees during or after specific events. Use your Purpose as a filter to understand if, how and when to act during these moments.

### 6. MAKE PURPOSE EVERYONE'S JOBS:

With a clear disconnect between C-suite and lower-level adoption of Purpose, it's important to ensure every employee in your organization understands Purpose is central to their roles. Build it into job descriptions, KPIs and reviews – as well as ongoing mentor conversations, company meetings and across all internal communications.

### 7. ENGAGE PURPOSE AMBASSADORS IN EVERY FUNCTION:

Employee-fueled communication and programs will be the key to achieve enterprise engagement. To activate employee engagement, identify Purpose ambassadors in each department who are trained to speak, engage and champion the Purpose – and regularly schedule cross-functional meetings to ensure Purpose is aligned and activated.

# WHAT EXECUTIVES ARE SAYING

INTERVIEWS FROM PURPOSE 360 PODCAST

"[Employees] are your ambassadors in the community. They want to be involved, and they are your primary stakeholder in corporate social responsibility. Some may think it's your customer, regulators, the media or nonprofits, but your colleagues are the ones who really help you get the work done."

## TIMOTHY MCCLIMON

Former President, American Express Foundation and SVP, Corporate Social Responsibility American Express

"It's a myth that looking after more of your stakeholders and investing in your people, your communities, and the environment must come out of the pockets of shareholders. That doctrine is going the way of the dodo. Increasingly, companies are competing for talent based on their core purpose. They're having to meet the needs of more stakeholders because it makes them better companies and it makes them more competitive."

## MARTIN WHITTAKER

CEO, JUST Capital

"We've seen many a cautionary tale of how Purpose was imbedded at an organization but the C-suite lost commitment. America's cultural and political backdrop today makes clear that winds can shift. Leaders who stay the Purpose course are those that will continue to see it as a long-term competitive advantage."

## WENDY SALOMON

Managing Director Corporate Strategy, The Harris Poll

"When companies take on purpose, it has to be authentic to their core products or services. And if it can't be core to the product, it must at least be authentic to the people in the company. I don't think you can achieve real buy-in and long-term support for something unless your people can relate to the cause."

## HEATHER NESLE

President, New York Life Foundation, SVP Corporate Responsibility, New York Life

"The old rule was that employees are a cost of doing business. Today, it is increasingly clear that employees are the accountability mechanism for a company. Employees are your allies: They're well aligned with the long-term health of the enterprise and open up both risk and opportunity to better view."

## JUDY SAMUELSON

Executive Director, Business and Society Program, Aspen Institute

"As an employer, you need to enable your workforce to fulfill their broader purpose. It does not stop with providing volunteering opportunities. It is about driving a culture. If you're doing the first step right, which is embedding purpose, you will have more meaningful opportunities to share, you can connect that to what people are doing on a daily basis in their jobs, and they can extend that to the work they do to support their community."

## BALAJI GANAPATHY

Chief Social Responsibility Officer, Tata Consultancy Services

"A purpose without action is just some great words that folks can feel good about. We use purpose as the lens through which we make all of our decisions. We want to have a ripple effect that elevates other individuals and communities, particularly those in need, and raises them in the process."

## BOB JIMENEZ

SVP Corporate Affairs, Cox Enterprises

"Employees are the most important brand advocates you'll ever have, and they're inspired by deeds – not words. Empowering employees to help improve social and environmental performance is not just an investment in the company's future, but in theirs as well."

## AARON PICKERING

Executive Vice President, Purpose, Headstand

"Purpose is now considered a core business strategy practiced by B2C and B2B sectors around the world. How it empowers and powers organizations to embrace extraordinary new stakeholder responsibilities is profound when developed, embedded and activated authentically. Why now? The stakes are high—really high. Do purpose right and organizations can become magnets for talent and accelerate growth. Purpose that is lived authentically in an organization ignites employee potential; inspires new products, services, and lines of business; sparks innovative collaborations; and deepens supply chain, customer, and consumer relationships."

## CAROL CONE

Carol Cone, Founder, Carol Cone ON PURPOSE

"Your employees are the lifeblood of your organization, and they help your Purpose live and breathe. If your employees – from top to bottom, right to left – are not bought in, your Purpose will flounder. A good authenticity check of any Purpose is to ask an employee, 'Do you feel you are contributing to your company's Purpose?' They won't mince words."

## WHITNEY DAILEY

Executive Vice President, Purpose, Allison+Partners

"The answer is always inside your organization – it's just a matter of giving people the opportunity to listen."

## KELLY MCGINNIS

SVP and Chief Communications Officer, Levi Strauss & Company

"I don't think organizations make up their purpose. They reveal their purpose. And it's up to the people in the organization to reveal that purpose and bring it to life."

## MICHAEL SNEED

Former EVP, Global Corporate Affairs and Chief Communications Officer, Johnson & Johnson



# CONTACT



## WHITNEY DAILEY

Executive Vice President, Purpose

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With more than 15 years of experience, Whitney is a thought leader at the intersection of purpose and communications. Her expertise has helped guide forward-looking thinking and communications strategies on behalf of PepsiCo, Athleta, B. Lab and others. She has personally authored upwards of 400 articles and 30 research reports on sustainability, social justice, and ESG topics and shared her message from the digital wavelengths of myriad podcasts, the lectern at Harvard University, the stage of Sundance and Fordam's Responsible Business and Future Fashion Coalitions.

Formerly senior vice president of Purpose Marketing, Research & Insights at Porter Novelli, Whitney transformed the agency into a Purpose-driven organization through powerful thought leadership, communications and marketing.

Whitney holds an MBA in Environmental Management from the UMass, Boston, a BA in Business Administration from the George Washington University and an MBA Certificate in Clean Energy & Sustainability from the UMass, Boston.



## AARON PICKERING

Executive Vice President, Purpose

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Aaron has 15 years' experience helping brands and nonprofits build emotional connections with consumers. He has advised major consumer and B2B brands - from Mars and Target to New Balance, CVS Health, PwC and Aflac - on ESG strategy, employee engagement, reporting, and how to authentically establish and communicate brand purpose to underscore consumer loyalty and corporate reputation.

He also advised the creation of the CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion initiative and the national Check Your Blindspots Tour, a hybrid digital and experiential employee engagement effort spanning Fortune 500s across America.

And he formerly headed up marketing and communications for, FIRST Robotics and was senior vice president at Cone, a Porter Novelli agency.

Aaron instructs communications and CSR at Lasell University and the George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management, where he earned a Master's in Strategic Public Relations focused on driving behavior change and shaping public opinion.



## CAROL CONE

CEO and Founder, Carol Cone ON PURPOSE

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Carol is internationally recognized for her work in purpose, corporate citizenship and CSR. Carol Cone ON PURPOSE is her third enterprise activating her purpose: to educate, inspire and accelerate purpose strategy, programs and impacts for corporations, brands, nonprofits and current and emerging professionals around the globe.

For more than 35 years, Cone has embraced a steadfast commitment to leading the purpose movement. Cone has executed over 250 purpose programs—from overall enterprise purpose to social purpose, ESG strategies and communications, to cause branding and nonprofit positioning, fundraising and stakeholder engagement. To amplify the value of purpose, over her career she has conducted more than 30 research studies to educate and inspire professionals to embrace this critical strategy. She also hosts the podcast Purpose 360, which has more than 110 episodes to date. And to support more powerful business and nonprofit partnerships, she authored *Breakthrough Nonprofit Branding*.

This extensive body of work has gained her fascinating descriptions: Purpose Queen (from the BBC), one of the world's 7 Sustainability Pioneers (Sustainable Brands) to "arguably the most powerful and visible figure in the world of 'Cause Branding' (PRWeek Power List). Her most special personal moment: meeting the Dalai Lama, prior to her speech in Calgary, titled "The Power of Business for Good." When she met him, he held her hand for 5 minutes. It was about a week before she got the nerve to wash that hand.



## WENDY SALOMON

Managing Director

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Wendy leads The Harris Poll's Reputation & Corporate Strategy practice. She has been measuring and thinking about reputation & disruption for more than 25 years. Her work focuses on reputation management, brand strategy and corporate purpose. Wendy has earned particular regard for her ability to consult in challenging B2B environments around the world and is a trusted c-suite advisor.