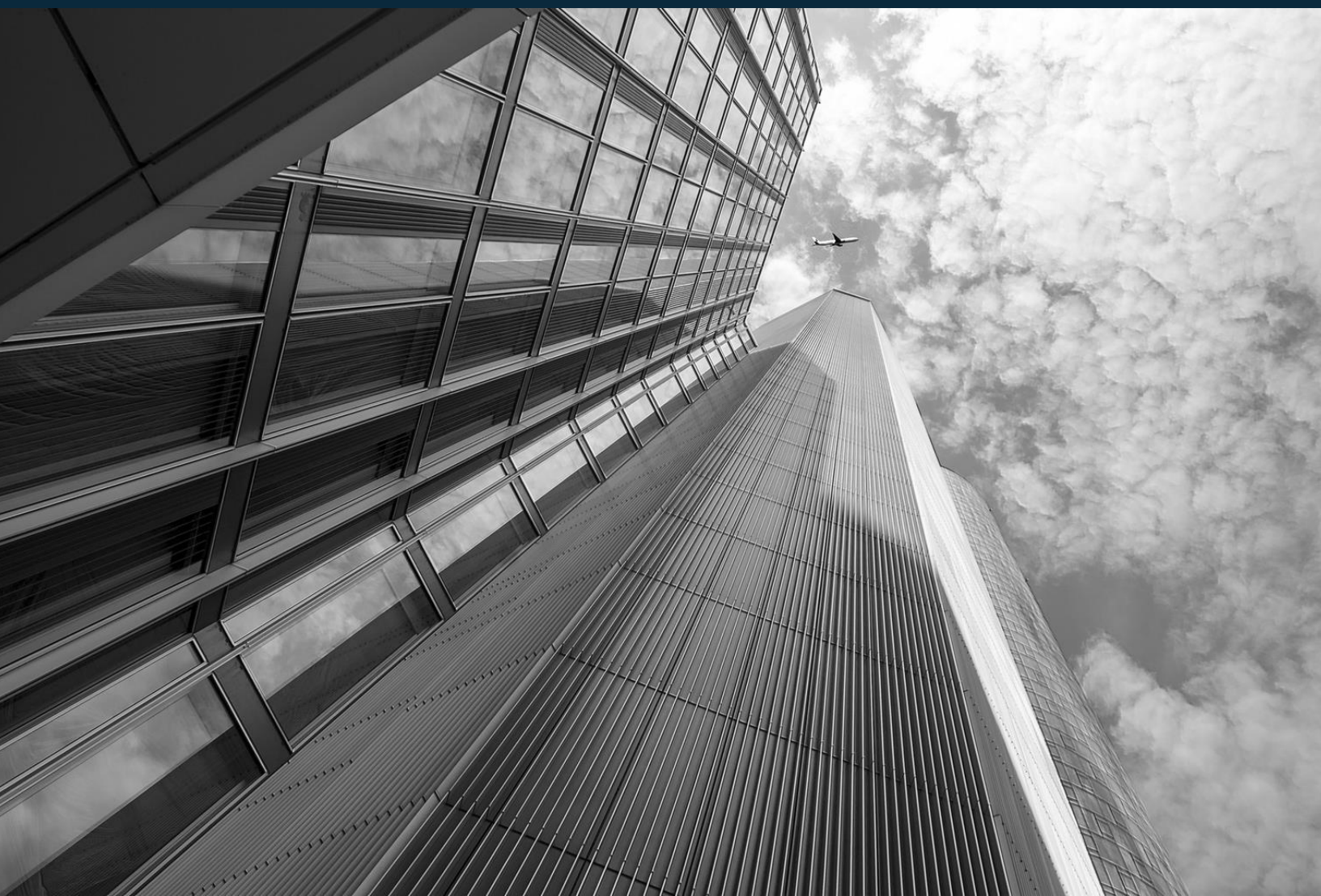


PURPOSE TRENDS REPORT

A selection of what has been published about Purpose in May 2025



May 2025

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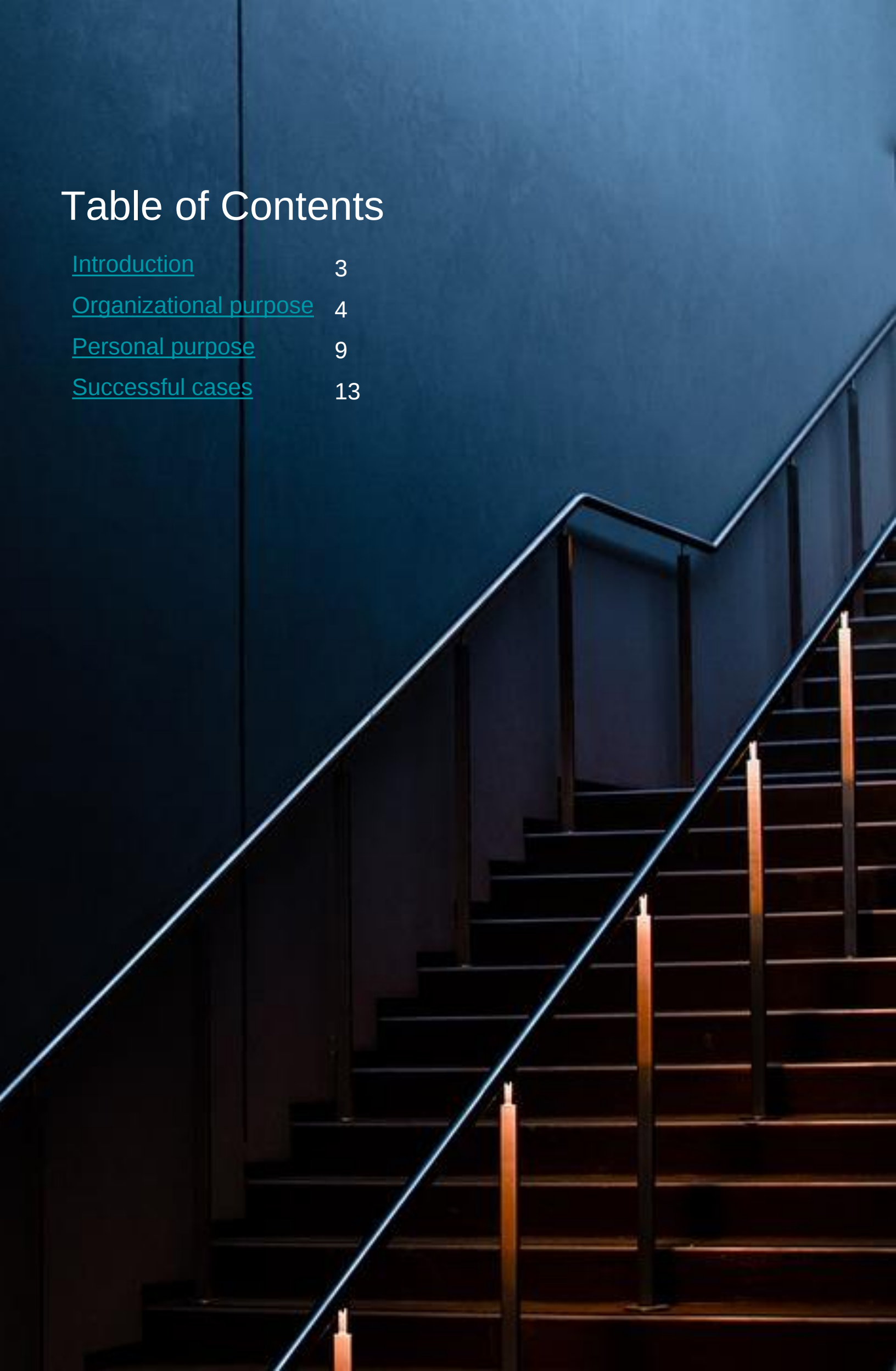
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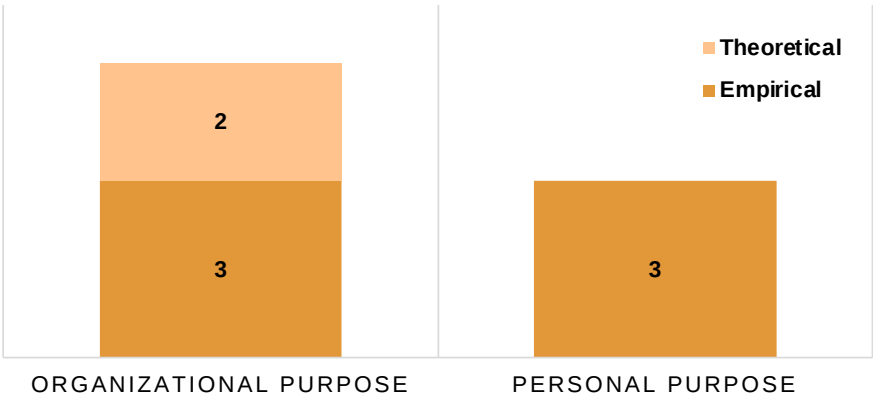
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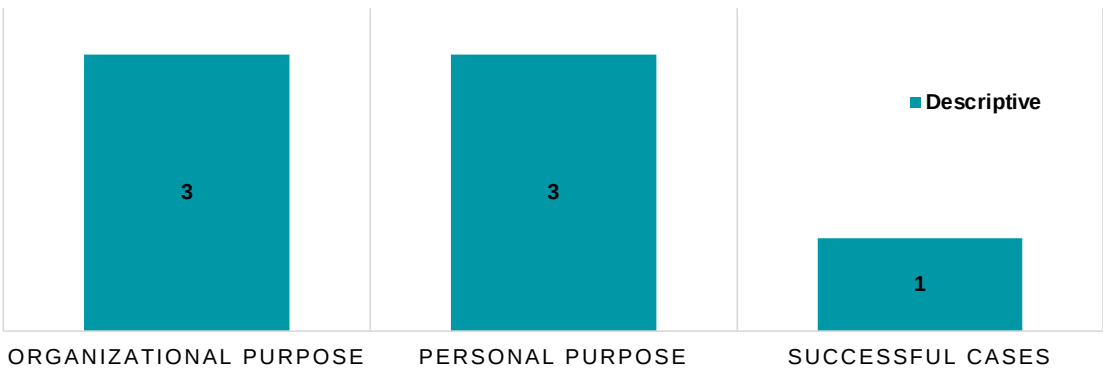
INTRODUCTION

In this report, we want to synthesize the most relevant about corporate purpose published in May 2025. 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. Bellow, we present statistics about the selected literature.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS - MAY 2025



ARTICLES AND REPORTS - MAY 2025



Recent academic studies collectively highlight that organizational purpose must be embedded deeply into corporate identity, strategy, and employee motivation to achieve sustainable success. Some articles highlight how purpose, especially when authentically led and shared, boosts employee engagement and ethical behavior. These findings defend purpose as a performance driver, stating it fosters innovation, trust, and resilience. Together, they emphasize that purpose is not a side strategy, but central to long-term business viability and cultural cohesion.

Regarding personal purpose, academic research shows that personal purpose enhances leadership effectiveness, green creativity, and social entrepreneurship outcomes. It emphasizes that meaning and purpose, intertwined with traits like adaptability and prosocial motivation, are key to navigating modern work demands. These insights explain how strategic self-reflection and people-focused leadership increase engagement and innovation. Notably, purpose is also shown to influence AI adoption and change management. This alignment across research and practice underscores how cultivating individual purpose not only benefits personal growth but also significantly impacts organizational performance and transformation.

Finally, successful cases illustrate how businesses integrate mission with societal impact. It highlights that aligning brand identity with community values fosters trust, loyalty, and competitive differentiation. Football for Peace exemplifies this by promoting peace through sport, supported by transparency and grassroots engagement. This case reinforces the broader claim that authentic, value-based branding leads to both societal benefit and organizational credibility—offering a compelling model for others aiming to embed purpose in their operational DNA.

Academic publications (5)

Integrating corporate identity, social responsibility, and reputation: A triadic framework for sustainable branding in hospitality & tourism

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

Abstract: Previous studies have explored the impact of corporate identity (CI), corporate social responsibility (CSR), and corporate reputation (CR), but they have largely overlooked the effects of inconsistent CSR strategies on unexpected outcomes among hospitality employees. To address this gap, this study examines the interplay among CI, CSR, and CR within the hospitality industry. Adopting a multidisciplinary approach, the research reviews the literature from marketing, design, organizational studies, and management. It then employs qualitative methods, including interviews with managers and focus groups with employees, supplemented by a survey conducted among hospitality and tourism employees in the UK, Malaysia, and Iran. The findings reveal 20 critical CI factors across corporate communication, visual identity, and management behavior, demonstrating that CI influences CSR and CR. This study introduces a triadic framework that integrates CI, CSR, and CR, offering a holistic perspective essential for sustainable branding in hospitality.

Organizational purpose and employee motivation: an fsQCA analysis

Journal of Organizational Effectiveness, JCR Q2 [see online](#)

Abstract: Purpose: Organizational Purpose (OP) has become increasingly important in the organizational context. This research focuses on how OP can contribute to employee motivation, using personal and institutional OP factors and considering the importance of employee motivation toward organizational success. Design/methodology/approach: To conduct the research, we selected a branch of a leading multinational company in the chemical sector. Based on data collected through a questionnaire sent out to employees and using fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA), we identified combinations of individual and institutional OP factors leading to high (or low) employee motivation. Findings: The results reveal that individual and institutional OP factors synergistically promote high employee motivation. The employees' contribution to the OP and the integrity of the organization's leadership are two key motivating factors. Practical implications: Organizations struggle to develop sustainable competitive advantages in an ever-competitive environment. Focusing on the "why" instead of the "how" may help organizations differentiate and achieve higher employee motivation. This research clarifies how to turn purpose into an asset to improve employee motivation. Originality/value: The conclusions highlight the need to share the OP through leadership actions and the importance of helping workers recognize the OP and its values, integrate them into their actions and feel how they contribute to its achievement.

“

Motivation is a variable that is part of the organizational context and influences the success of companies. The purpose, in turn, is the driving force that, when implemented and disseminated, inspires workers and increases their motivation.

”

Cultivating Spirituality in Organizations: The Role of Spiritual Discernment

Journal of Management Spirituality & Religion, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: This Organizational spirituality addresses the complexities of the organizational landscape. It requires the embodiment of spiritual practices within organizations. As one such spiritual practice, spiritual discernment is closely linked to decision-making, a critical aspect of organizational functioning. However, there is a need to establish a clear link between organizational spirituality and spiritual discernment, as this integration provides a way for organizations to begin their spiritual development. This paper presents a conceptual framework that identifies and clarifies the employee-enabling conditions—such as practical wisdom, appreciation of beauty and excellence, and social intelligence—and explains how these conditions facilitate the practice of spiritual discernment. This study advances the field of organizational spirituality by linking organizational spirituality with spiritual discernment, expanding the understanding of how spirituality can be systematically integrated into decision-making processes, and highlighting the role of employee capabilities in this integration.

“Organizations are encouraged to recognize and incentivize the development of spiritual discernment and related capabilities among their employees, as this will likely lead to more profound, value-aligned decision-making and overall enhancement of organizational practices. Since some organizations may be less advanced in integrating spirituality than others, developing spiritual discernment might transform their organizational culture and decision-making processes.”



How the Social Identity Approach Can Improve Interoperability in Multi-Agency Emergency Response Teams

Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management, JCR Q2 [see online](#)

Abstract: Major incident inquiries and research highlight persistent problems in interoperability. Evidence points to failures in the ability of responders from different organisations to work effectively together, which hinders collaborative efforts. Recently, researchers have argued that one reason why collaboration problems exist when different teams are required to work together is due to multiple identities within the overarching team. Whilst this perspective has been applied to other teams operating in extreme conditions, such as military teams, the evidence in emergency response teams has been scarce. In this paper, we summarise results from a programme of research in which the Social Identity Approach was applied to interoperability in the emergency services to better understand the role of social identities in collaboration, and to develop recommendations for training and policy. The findings from this programme of research show that, (1) shared identity among responders from different services improves interoperability; (2) factors such as strategic communication, context-driven salience processes, and interaction-driven salience processes can facilitate this shared identity; (3) structural barriers, cultural differences, and historically strained relationships can impede shared identity development; and (4) there is a need for psychological factors to be incorporated into interoperability training, which can be delivered either online or in-person. Based on this programme of research, we make five recommendations to improve interoperability in multi-agency teams, focusing on integrating social identity processes into training, promoting leadership practices that foster shared identity, addressing structural barriers to shared identity, developing support systems for emotional and social needs, and fostering inter-team collaboration and communication.

“ Team leaders should be encouraged to use collective pronouns (e.g., ‘us’, ‘our’, ‘ours’) and strategies that promote a sense of unity and shared purpose among organisations within the multi-agency team. ”

Measuring person-centred care in the mission, vision, and core value statements of Canadian healthcare organizations

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

Abstract: Background: Person-centred care (PCC) has been shown to improve health outcomes. The inclusion and incorporation of person-centredness in care has been a growing priority for healthcare organizations across Canada. Methods: Person-Centred Care Quality Indicators (PC-QI) evaluate to what extent various PCC elements have been integrated into healthcare organizations. Using the first PC-QI, content analysis was performed on the mission, vision, and core value statements of 54 healthcare organizations to assess whether PCC is being included as a strategic and decision-making priority in the Canadian healthcare system. Results: Fifty-three healthcare organizations (98%) included at least one domain of PCC in their statements. The three most frequent were compassionate care (85%), trusting relationship with providers (70%), and co-designed care (56%). There was no presence of affordable care. Conclusion: Canadian healthcare organizations are working towards promoting and implementing a culture that prioritizes some elements of PCC in the care of patients.

Articles (3)

The Purpose Profit Loop Requires Purpose Drive Performance

Jeff Fromm, Forbes [see online](#)

The article discusses the importance of integrating purpose into business strategies. It argues that companies focusing solely on profit often make reactive decisions that harm long-term success. By embedding purpose into their operations, businesses can align employees, build customer trust, and foster innovation. The article explains that purpose-driven companies outperform competitors financially and attract top talent. It also cautions against "purpose-washing" and emphasizes the need for genuine commitment to purpose. Ultimately, it defends the idea that purpose is essential for sustainable profitability.

Why Leaders Build Purpose-Driven Organizations That Invest In Community

Brent Gleeson, Forbes [see online](#)

The article discusses the strategic advantages of embedding purpose into business leadership. It explains that purpose-driven organizations attract and retain talent, with employees 1.4 times more engaged and productive. The article states that companies with a clear mission outperform competitors in innovation, with a 30% increase in innovation rates. It argues that purpose fosters resilience, enabling organizations to navigate challenges effectively. The piece emphasizes that purpose-driven leadership aligns strategy with societal impact, leading to sustainable growth and a positive legacy. In essence, it defends the view that integrating purpose into leadership is essential for long-term success.

“ The Anyone who has worked under an uninspired or narrowly focused leader understands that true leadership transcends boardrooms, dashboards, and quarterly earnings. It is not confined to metrics or shareholder returns—it is a human endeavor that radiates outward, shaping the culture of organizations and the communities in which they operate. Holistic leaders recognize that the ultimate success of their enterprise is inextricably linked to the depth of purpose they help cultivate across every level of the organization.

”

Purpose At The Core: How To Drive Long-Term Business Success

Filomena Di Luise, Forbes [see online](#)

The article emphasizes the importance of integrating purpose into a company's core strategy. It argues that businesses with a clear, authentic purpose outperform their competitors in various aspects, including innovation, employee engagement, and customer loyalty. The article explains that purpose-driven organizations attract and retain top talent, particularly among younger generations who prioritize alignment with their personal values. It also states that integrating purpose into decision-making processes fosters a cohesive culture and drives sustainable growth. The article highlights the need for companies to go beyond superficial commitments and genuinely embed purpose into their operations. By doing so, businesses can achieve long-term success and create a positive impact on society.

“ Purpose is often treated like a slogan, something catchy to put on a website or slide deck. But purpose goes much deeper. It’s a mission, both personal and organizational, that defines who we are and how we create impact. When we move beyond surface-level statements and understand purpose as a structured, living framework, we unlock something powerful: trust, commitment and the potential for long-term, strategic partnerships. ”



Academic publications (3)

Towards a sustainable workforce: integrating workplace spirituality, green leadership, and employee adaptability for green creativity

Discover Sustainability, JCR Q3 [see online](#)

Abstract: Utilizing time-lagged data from 404 employees in the manufacturing sector of an underdeveloped country and grounded in the S–O–R theory, this paper adopts a holistic perspective to explore the synergies among workplace spirituality, green leadership, and employee adaptability, elucidating their collective impact on cultivating a sustainable and creative workforce. PLS-SEM analysis revealed noteworthy findings, confirming direct and indirect relationships between Green Leadership and Green Creativity. However, the moderating influence of Workplace Spirituality was not substantiated. These findings will help the literature to determine what factors can drive green creativity at the individual level that's still largely unexplored, in particular WS and employee adaptability as key individual-level determinants. This research provides new insights into green leadership interaction and the actors behind sustainable workforce practices and advances existing knowledge of employee-directed environmental initiatives.

“ The worth of work is neither inherent to the nature of the task one performs nor predetermined, known or easily accounted for. It is an outcome of complex and constant negotiations between subjective perceptions and others’ and social evaluations. ”

Meaning, personal purpose and the Big Five personality traits in exploring leader effectiveness in South Africa’s FMCG sector during the Fourth Industrial Revolution

Journal of Economics and Management (Poland), JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: An Aim/purpose - Effective leadership in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) era requires the right mix of personality traits, a deep sense of meaning, and personal purpose. The Big Five personality traits theory was chosen for its cross-cultural applicability and effectiveness in describing various personality traits precisely. The study had a two-fold objective: first, to explore the impact of meaning and personal purpose on the effectiveness of leaders in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector in South Africa (SA) during 4IR era, and second, to understand how meaning and personal purpose are embedded within the Big Five personality traits. Design/methodology/approach - The research design was qualitative phenomenological, and 13 purposively sampled participants were interviewed to explore their experiences as senior leaders adapting to the 4IR demands in the FMCG industry in SA. The data were analyzed using a manual thematic analysis process. Findings - The findings showed that leaders perform optimally when they have a sense of meaning and personal purpose and that leaders in SA's FMCG industry require support and expert guidance to adapt to the digital era. Research implications/limitations - Leadership development should address the new competencies required to transition to a new way of leading in the 4IR. This study is limited to South Africa's FMCG industry. Originality/value/contribution - The study expanded the theoretical understanding of meaning and purpose and the integration of these concepts into the Big Five personality traits.

Gender and social entrepreneurship fundraising: A mission drift perspective

Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, JCR Q1
[see online](#)

Abstract: An increasing number of entrepreneurs are pursuing social welfare goals using viable revenue-generating business models to sustain operations—a practice known as social entrepreneurship. In this research, we highlight that such a hybrid model of entrepreneurship raises funders' concerns over mission drift (i.e., entrepreneurs prioritizing financial gain at the expense of social missions) and examine how these concerns create a unique gender disparity in social venture fundraising. Integrating the mission drift literature and social role theory, we posit that female entrepreneurs are better positioned to alleviate funders' concerns over mission drift as they are perceived as having stronger prosocial motivation. As a result, they will garner more financial support for their early-stage hybrid social ventures relative to their male counterparts. We further propose that this female advantage may diminish when social entrepreneurs have nonprofit work experience that signals their commitment to social missions. Findings from archival field data of 262 social crowdfunding campaigns (Study 1) and two preregistered experiments (Studies 2 and 3) provide rigorous empirical evidence for the proposed gender effect on social entrepreneurial fundraising and its underlying mechanisms. However, the findings on the moderating effects of nonprofit work experience across studies remain inconclusive. This research sheds light on how the hybrid nature of social enterprises recalibrates evaluations and gender dynamics in fundraising, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of gender and entrepreneurial financing.



Articles (3)

Apply Strategic Thinking to Create a Meaningful Life

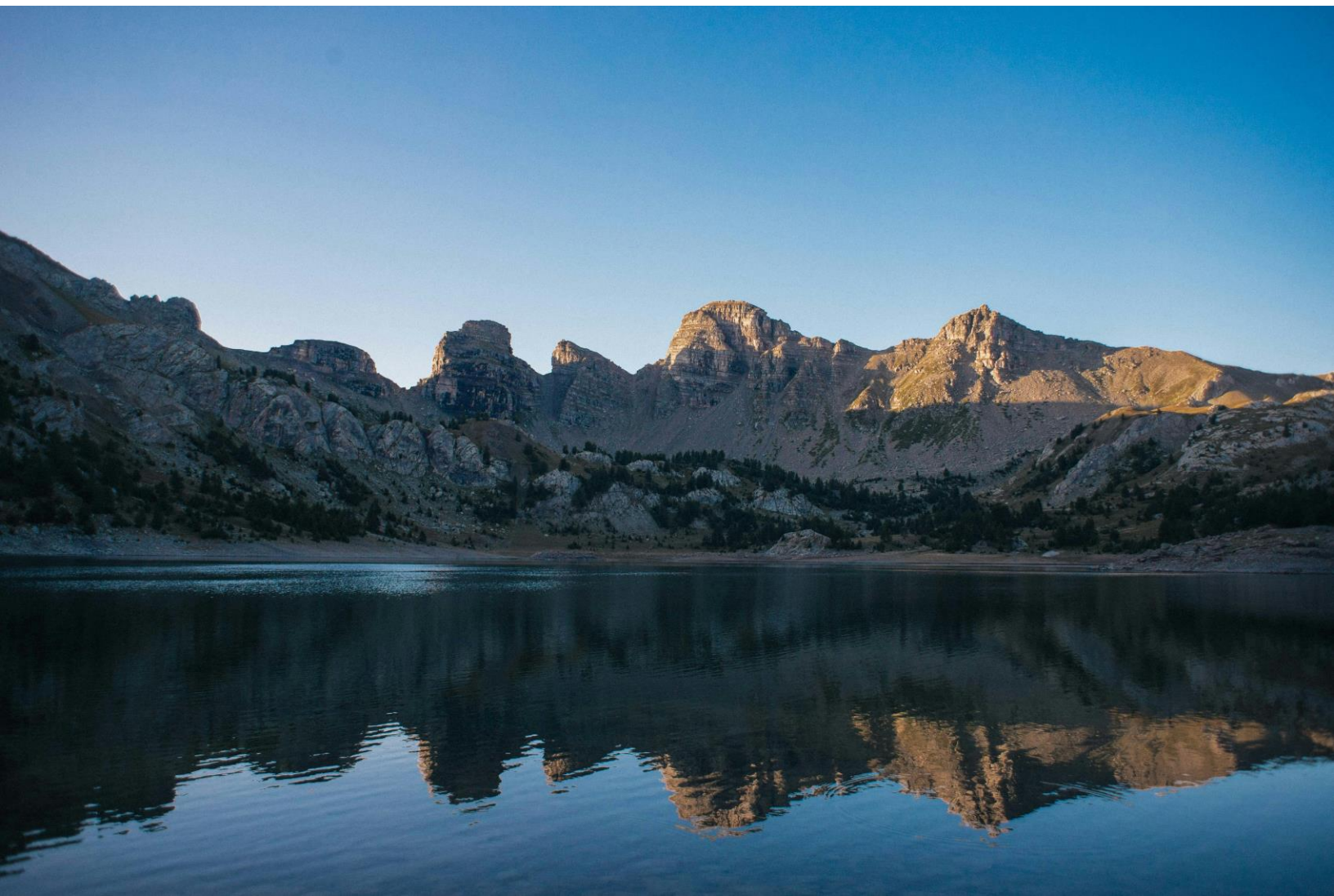
Rainer Strack, Harvard Business Review [see online](#)

The article presents a structured approach to personal development. It argues that individuals can apply corporate strategic frameworks to design a fulfilling life. The process involves seven key questions: defining success, identifying purpose, envisioning the future, assessing one's life portfolio, learning from benchmarks, making portfolio choices, and ensuring sustained change. By adapting these steps, individuals can align their actions with their values and goals, leading to greater resilience and fulfillment. The article emphasizes the importance of intentionality and strategic planning in personal growth.

Centering People, Driving Performance: Leading A People-Focused Business

Bob Rhatigan, Forbes [see online](#)

The article emphasizes the critical role of human connection in organizational success. It argues that while strategies and technology are essential, the relationships within and around an organization determine the success of transformational efforts. The piece explains that feedback loops, intentional people practices, and robust training and development can transform change from a strategic goal into a sustainable reality, fostering environments where innovation thrives, and employees feel deeply connected to a shared purpose. It states that leaders who prioritize human connection are more likely to meet their objectives, increasing goal achievement likelihood from 28% to 73%. The article concludes that transformation is more than an operational overhaul; it's a journey that encompasses every individual within the organization.



New Survey Shows Purpose Drives Employee Engagement And AI Adoption

Chris Westfall, Forbes [see online](#)

The article highlights the significant impact of purpose on workplace dynamics. It explains that employees who perceive their work as meaningful are more likely to engage with AI tools, leading to increased productivity and job satisfaction. The article states that organizations that align their missions with employee values experience higher AI adoption rates. It argues that integrating purpose into business strategies fosters a culture of innovation and trust, essential for successful AI implementation. The piece emphasizes that purpose-driven leadership is crucial for navigating the evolving technological landscape.

“ Adoption of AI requires not just a technological shift, but a human-centered and empathetic approach from senior leadership (...)
The ability to impact employee engagement and enthusiasm aligns around a new leadership initiative, centered on identifying your individual purpose.

”



Articles (1)

No Water, No Peace: A Branding Playbook From The Football Pitch

Jeetendr Sehdev, Forbes [see online](#)

The article emphasizes the importance of purpose-driven branding in building trust and loyalty. It explains that brands should align their missions with societal values and engage in meaningful storytelling. The article states that such authenticity resonates with consumers, fostering deeper connections. It argues that this approach leads to sustainable success and differentiation in competitive markets. Relating this to Football for Peace's success, the organization has effectively built trust by prioritizing safety, transparency, and community engagement in its branding strategy. Football for Peace's commitment to these values has positioned it as a leader in promoting peace and understanding through football, demonstrating the power of purpose-driven branding.



