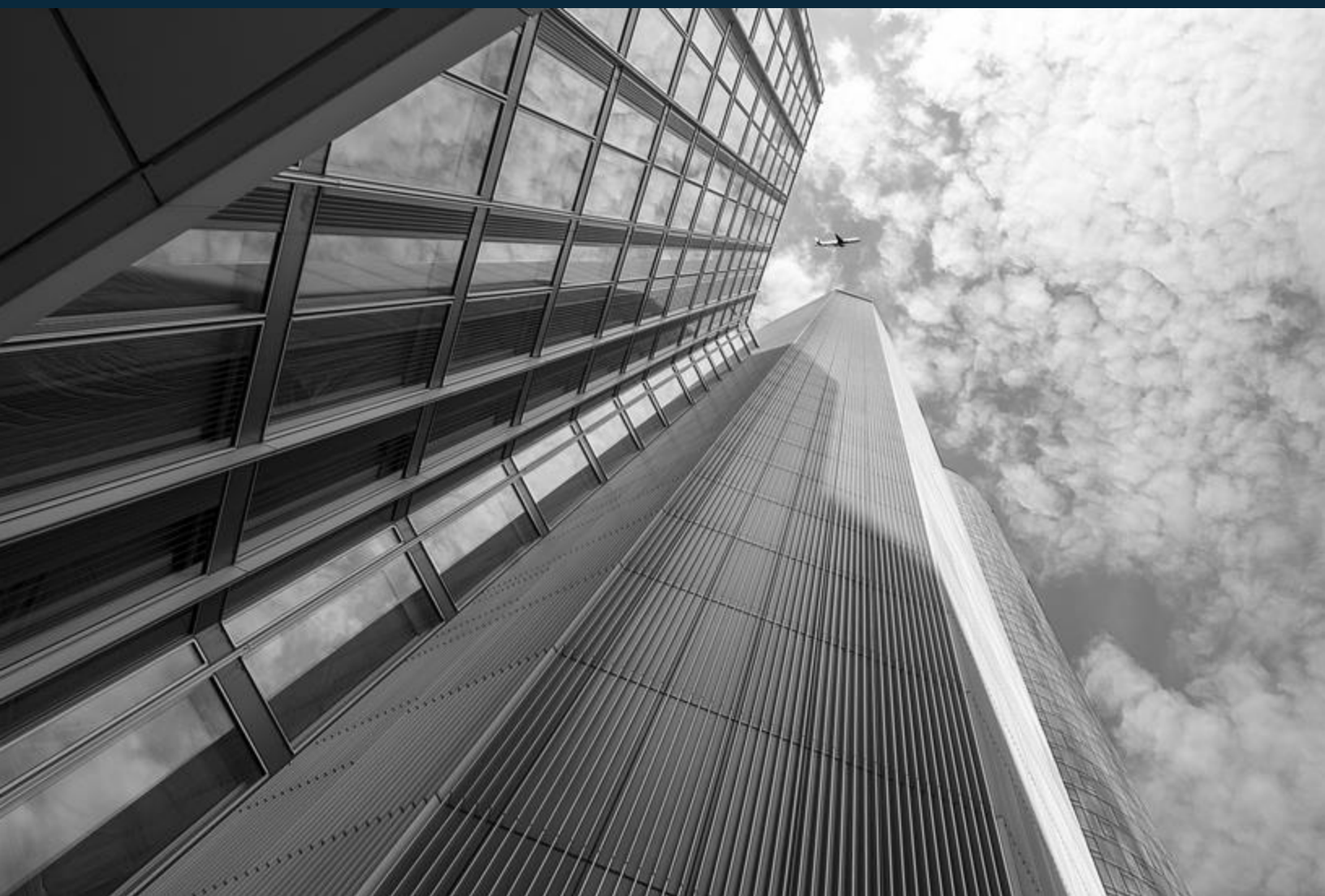


PURPOSE TRENDS REPORT

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



October 2024

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

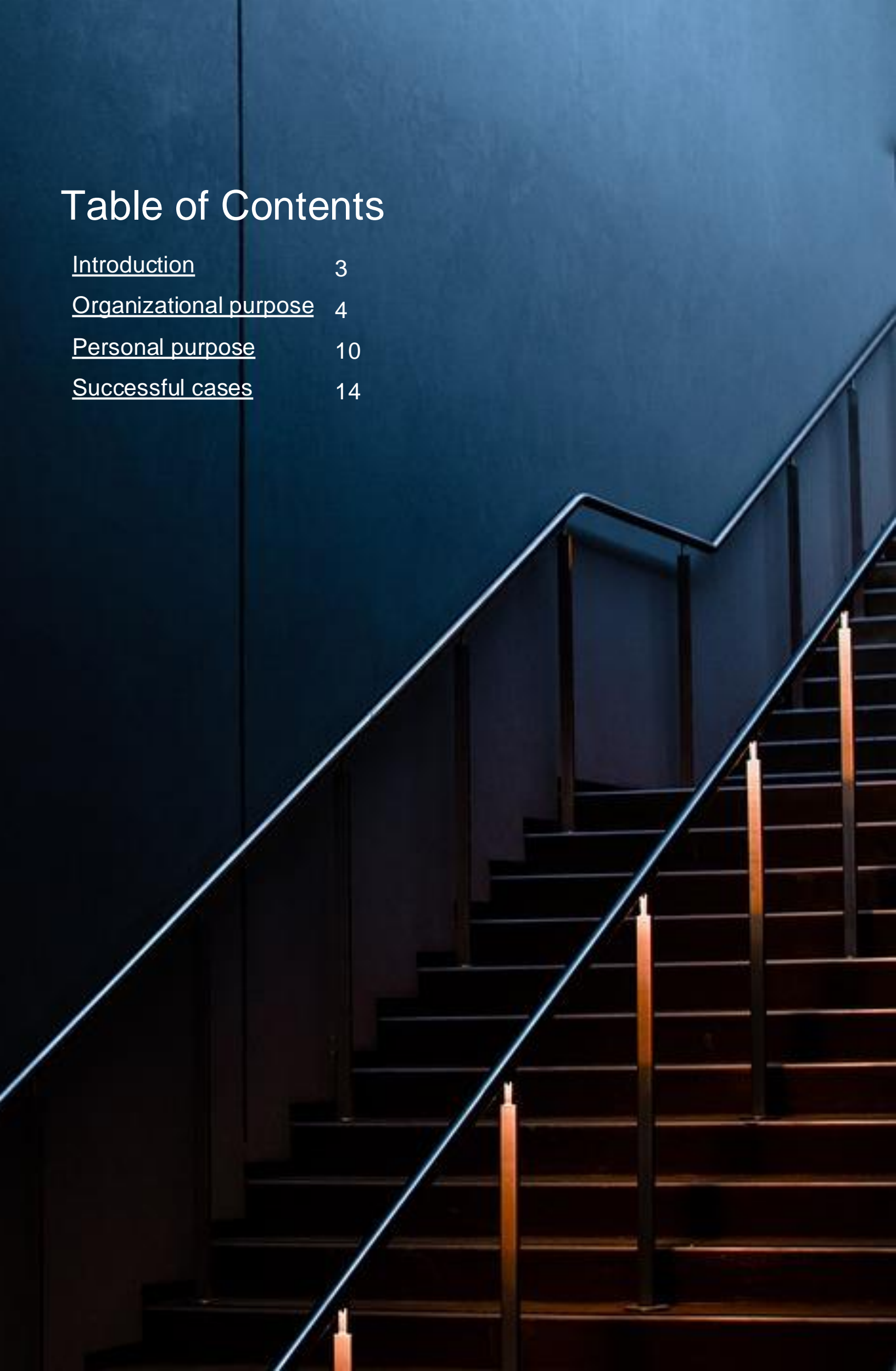
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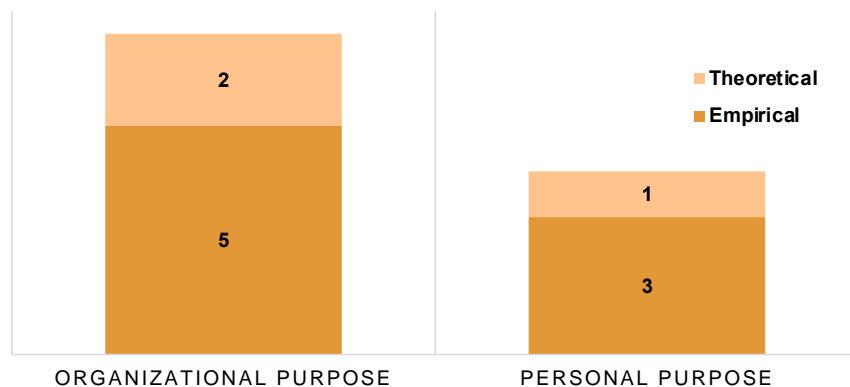
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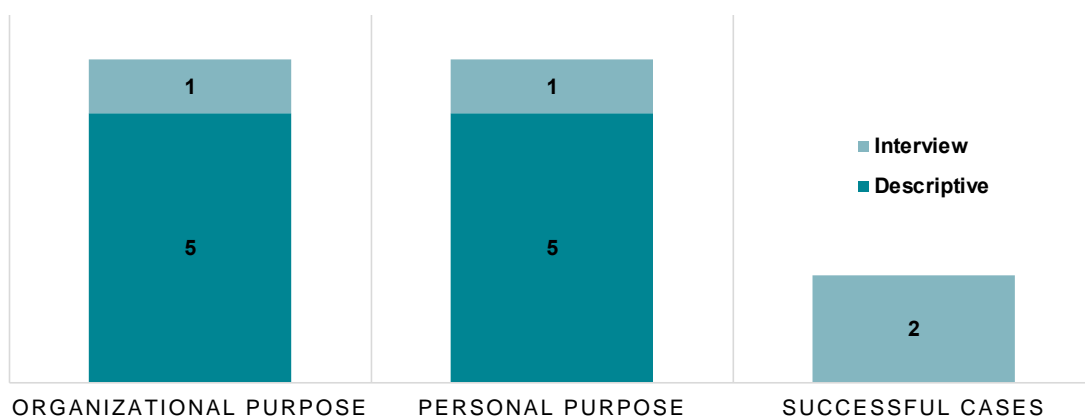
INTRODUCTION

In this report, we want to synthesize the most relevant about corporate purpose published in October 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 - OCTOBER 2024



ARTICLES AND REPORTS - OCTOBER 2024



Academic research underscores the complexity of organizational purpose, emphasizing identity, leadership, and strategic alignment. Studies reveal how professional identity can outweigh organizational ties, while mindful leadership fosters sustainability by connecting employee behaviors with green outcomes. Furthermore, inclusive leadership frameworks challenge profit-driven models, advocating stakeholder co-creation for equity. Articles extend these insights by critiquing superficial ESG approaches and highlighting purpose-driven success stories, which exemplify the integration of values and growth, offering a blueprint for transformative leadership.

Further, academics on personal purpose highlight meaningful work as key to resilience and engagement, showing its role in combating workplace challenges like ostracism and workplace violence, while also empowering individuals to align personal identity with broader impact. Articles extend these insights by emphasizing purpose-driven leadership and its ability to inspire fulfillment, foster teamwork, and drive societal change, bridging personal meaning with professional aspirations.

Finally, purpose-driven companies like Narrative Food and ZaaS address hybrid work challenges through creative solutions like shared snacks and cooking demos, fostering connection and engagement. Kimberly-Clark demonstrates how aligning global purpose with local impact can drive meaningful change. These examples highlight adaptable strategies that meet diverse needs while achieving organizational goals.

Academic publications (7)

Salesperson intra-career mobility perceptions: Exploring the role of professional versus organizational identities

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

Abstract: Salesperson career paths have evolved from traditional to boundaryless models, as salespeople are moving between sales organizations with greater frequency. In this new landscape, it is crucial to consider how salespeople's perceptions of their employers and the sales profession impact their mobility. While previous research has focused on salesperson identification with their organization, identification with the profession remains largely unexplored. To address this gap, the authors conducted semi-structured interviews with 57 sales professionals to better understand their work identities. They offer a theoretical model illustrating how professional and organizational identities become more or less salient, influencing intra-career mobility (i.e., job movement within the sales profession). When salespeople experienced a mismatch between their work realities and desired identities, they redefined their sales roles around a core work value. This process shifted their focus towards their professional identity over their organizational identity, affecting their perceptions of mobility within the sales profession.

“ Understanding when and why professional identification versus organizational identification is beneficial can help firms craft balanced strategies that foster strong relationships with the company and personal development within the profession. ”

Foreign identity and organizational crises: Evidence in the U.S. automobile industry

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

Abstract: Multinational corporations (MNCs) adeptly manage Liabilities of Foreignness (LOF) and Assets of Foreignness (AOF) to their advantage, and central to this endeavor is the strategic management of their foreign identity. Our research identifies a critical context where foreign identity remains a liability: organizational crises. Drawing on organizational identity and legitimation process theories, we contend that foreign firms face greater legitimacy losses compared to domestic firms during crises due to magnified foreign identity and differences in legitimacy standards. Furthermore, a crisis in one foreign firm can trigger stronger negative spillover effects on other foreign firms than on domestic firms. We test our theory through an analysis of US automobile recall events, demonstrating significant legitimacy impacts for foreign firms. Our findings illuminate the complex dynamics of foreign identity management, offering new insights into the persistent challenges of LOF during times of crisis.

Two entrepreneurial firms, a digital disruption, and different responses: the role of organizational mission and experiential computing digital options

Information and Management, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: Two leading digital entrepreneurial firms responded to a digital disruption differently. One adapted, whereas the other stagnated and eventually went bankrupt. In this inductive multi-case study, we strive to understand how they came to do so. Through constant comparison analysis between data, emerging theory, and existing literature, we develop a nuanced theoretical model suggesting that for entrepreneurial firms, having an abstract mission and pursuing diverse digital options actually constrain firms' ability to respond to a digital disruption. But a specific mission and selective options enable adaptive agility. Overall, our emergent process theory highlights critically overlooked entrepreneurial firms, which are increasingly facing disruptions from powerful, established firms. Our emergent theory also prompts us to reconsider the conventional wisdom that digital options inherently enable agility.

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We note the distinction between mission and mission statements. A mission may consist of multiple statements, and each statement represents a key purpose.

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A fairy tale with an unhappy ending: the organizational regulation of “Latina accountant identity” in Spain

Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: Purpose: Identity regulation is part of a management control package. Organizations regulate employees' self-identity to influence their behaviors. The success of this regulation depends on its trade-off with employees' work identities and personalities. Organizational discourse nurtures this dynamic and interactive process. We focus on the regulation of an (undesired) organizational identity that is born at the intersection of race/ethnicity, gender, sex and migrant discrimination in accounting-related positions. We aim to analyze how Latina accountants who migrate to Spain perceive that their triple status as Latina, women and migrants affects their careers as accountants and interpret whether this triple intersectional discrimination aims to create a Latina accountant's self-identity. Design/methodology/approach: This critical study follows a phenomenological approach to analyze the experiences of women born in Latin America who migrated to Spain to occupy accounting-related positions. A thematic analysis of their semi-structured interviews allowed us to examine the challenges faced by Latina accountants in their accounting careers in Spain. Findings: Our interviewees' narratives display an internalization of, even resignation to, a self-identity that we label “Latina accountant identity.” This identity is based on explicit discrimination discourses that cause them to suffer from the intersection of racism, sexism and migrant conditions and is nurtured by the discourses of their senior managers, co-workers and subordinates. Originality/value: To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to frame the regulation of an intersectional discriminatory identity that is used to control Latina accountants from the inside, acting on the triple condition of Latinas, women and foreigners, influencing their self-perceptions regarding work and personal lives.

Innovation centralization and top managers' psychological well-being: The moderating effects of entrepreneurial passion and organizational identification

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

Abstract: Organizational constraints are work environment characteristics that make performing job-related tasks more challenging. In this paper, we examine how innovation centralization – the concentration of innovation-related decision-making authority among top management – constitutes a constraint that can affect top managers' psychological well-being because it makes the pursuit of innovation more difficult for top managers. We also propose that top managers' entrepreneurial passion, which is the intense enjoyment of entrepreneurial activities, and organizational identification, which is the shared identity managers may have with their firms, moderate this relationship. We tested our hypotheses using a multi-wave survey design with a sample of top managers (N = 396). Although we do not find a direct effect of innovation centralization on top managers' psychological well-being, we find that for top managers who have less entrepreneurial passion or more organizational identification, the relationship between innovation centralization and psychological well-being was negative.

How does mindful leadership promote employee green behavior? The moderating role of green human resource management

Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: Given the global environmental issues, mindful leadership could be a new approach to help employees and organizations keep their inner capabilities of mindfulness and resilience in facing uncertainty and complexity. Building on social information processing theory, the present study theorized and tested the effect of mindful leadership on employee green behavior. Among the links proposed, green organizational identity and green self-efficacy were utilized as mediating roles, and green human resource management (GHRM) was regarded as a moderator. A total of 291 sample data were collected from Southwestern China, and the research hypotheses were examined by a structural equation model. Results confirm the significant indirect effect between mindful leadership and employee green behavior through the mediating roles of green organizational identity and green self-efficacy. GHRM moderates the relationship between mindful leadership and employee green organizational identity, green self-efficacy, and green behavior. Results provide a new perspective on employees' green outcomes and provide practical significance for improving organizational environmental sustainability.

Inclusive leadership toward reshaping corporate purpose for sustainable development

Leadership, JCR Q3 [see online](#)

Abstract: This paper delves into the complex relationship between business leadership, sustainability, and inclusivity, representing a step toward developing a more inclusive leadership approach to sustainable development that fosters shared power relations between business leaders and marginalized members of society. With environmental and social conditions worsening, it is urgent for corporations to move away from the neoliberal profit-maximization models advocated by Milton Friedman and instead prioritize humanity and the environment. This shift requires a fundamental restructuring of businesses to move beyond profit maximization and address societal power imbalances by including all stakeholders. Our inclusive leadership for sustainable development framework, rooted in symbolic interactionism, offers a holistic lens for including marginalized groups. At the microlevel, it focuses on business leaders' personas, characterized by pro-demographic diversity and biodiversity, cognitive complexity for sustainable development, and social empathy, which can potentially create a macro-level impact. These characteristics, accompanied by macro perspectives toward repurposing corporations away from neoliberalism, would be a step forward in cultivating shared power dynamics between business leaders and marginalized communities for the betterment of society.

Articles (6)

The Power of Purpose in the Financial Services Industry

Becky Willan, Given [see online](#)

The article discusses that banks and businesses in the financial services industry are coming under greater scrutiny for not only how they invest their money but, increasingly, who they invest it with. It also wonders if the banking industry –which operates in a challenging space when it comes to navigating purpose– deserves the level of criticism we are seeing in the media. It also points that what we do know is that businesses operating in the sector need to have more clarity and focus around their purpose. The article ends by narrating the successful case of Nationwide, a financial services institution leading with purpose and social impact, while seeing consecutive growth year-on-year for over a decade in the number of current accounts it holds.

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We need to remember that purpose is about good business and strategic focus, not taking a moral high ground. Adopting a purpose-driven business approach is also not a nice-to-have in lieu of profitability – indeed the latter is essential. Profit without purpose is meaningless and purpose without profit is unsustainable.

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How to achieve the promise of corporate purpose

Sarah Kaplan, Forbes [see online](#)

The article explains that while corporate social responsibility (CSR) and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals are widely discussed, many firms fail to take meaningful action. It states that decoupling values from actions helps companies maintain legitimacy without significant investment. It defends moral approaches to purpose, emphasizing prosocial impacts over profits, as illustrated by Dick's Sporting Goods. The article argues that innovative, inclusive, and purpose-driven strategies—like Indigenous governance models or stakeholder co-creation—are vital for long-term sustainability. It concludes by urging collective efforts for transformative leadership to address global challenges.

“ If required actions are not clarified, purpose risks being like most of our New Year's resolutions — easily made and easily broken. ”

3 Tips For Strategic Purpose-Driven Leadership

Jose Herrera, Forbes [see online](#)

“ Founders and senior staff have a duty to help employees see how their individual roles contribute to the overall mission, creating a sense of fulfillment, engagement and dedication. ”

The article explains that enduring leadership requires CEOs to embed values into their brand and culture. It states that purpose-driven leadership, which fosters employee meaning and commitment, enhances organizational success. It defends the economic and relational benefits of purpose, citing a study showing significant growth for purpose-driven companies. It argues that leaders should model purpose, create growth opportunities aligned with company values, and promote broader purpose outside work. Additionally, it recommends engaging activities to enhance employee satisfaction. The article concludes that a purpose-driven culture boosts innovation, productivity, and organizational growth.

Líderes con propósito: dar sentido a lo que hacemos para construir un mundo mejor

Fundación máshumano, [see and listen online](#)

The podcast explains how businesses, now trusted more than governments, bear a responsibility to act ethically and address societal challenges. It states that corporate purpose and values are critical for attracting and retaining talent, as employees seek alignment with meaningful goals. Experts argue that purpose-driven leadership connects companies with society and fosters sustainable growth. Initiatives like Líderes con Propósito promote organizations with authentic commitments to positive impact. It emphasizes the need for businesses to integrate purpose into decision-making, ensuring coherence, engagement, and a lasting legacy for employees and communities.

Pharma must embrace purpose – for both social impact and business growth

Dan Russell, The Drum [see online](#)

The article explains that purpose in pharma must extend beyond words to tangible actions that address societal and environmental challenges. It states that while pharma inherently serves a vital role by improving lives, it struggles to balance profit and purpose, often focusing on brands over people. It argues for a shift toward direct patient engagement and a broader approach to healthcare, emphasizing wellness and equity. It defends that ESG practices and transparency are crucial for sustainability and reputational growth. Ultimately, it emphasizes that meaningful purpose offers immense opportunities for impact and growth.

Profit meets purpose: Unlocking growth through sustainable business models

Kilian Kaminski, EU-Startups [see online](#)

The article explains the growing adoption of purpose-driven business models, emphasizing sustainability as a crucial factor for long-term success. It argues that aligning profitability with environmental and social goals boosts consumer trust, brand loyalty, and investment opportunities. It defends that responsible practices, such as those implemented by Pandora, can drive profitability while addressing ecological challenges. Additionally, it states that transparency, leadership commitment, and measurable goals are essential for integrating sustainability. Ultimately, it contends that businesses have a responsibility to innovate and lead in creating a more sustainable and equitable future.



Academic publications (4)

Does one's sense of psychological safety mitigate the link between workplace ostracism and employee vitality? Meaningful work as a boundary role

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

Abstract: The present study examines one's sense of psychological safety as a mediator between workplace ostracism and vitality. It also tests meaningful work as a moderator between one's sense of psychological safety and vitality. The present research collected cross-sectional data applying purposive and convenience sampling from 390 frontline hotel employees in Thailand. Workplace ostracism has a negative impact on one's sense of psychological safety and vitality. One's sense of psychological safety mediates the connection between workplace ostracism and vitality, and meaningful work positively moderates the association between one's sense of psychological safety and vitality. These findings not only expand upon the conservation of resources (COR) theory and confirm the mediating role of psychological safety but also extend value congruence theory by moderating the role of meaningful work. The study highlights to increase meaningful work and one's sense of psychological safety to improve vitality, and the strategies to minimize workplace ostracism.

A Cross-Sectional Study Exploring the Impact of Violence on Healthcare Employees' Work Engagement and Meaningful Work

Journal of Advanced Nursing, JCR Q1 [see online](#)

Abstract: Aim: This study aims to determine the prevalence of workplace violence against healthcare professionals and its effects on work engagement and meaningful work in healthcare settings. Design: This study is designed as an analytical cross-sectional study. Methods: This study surveyed 676 healthcare professionals in Turkiye between June and December 2022, using face-to-face and online methods. Scales measured exposure to and witnessing violence, work engagement, and meaningful work. The study has adhered to STROBE guidelines. Statistical analyses included descriptive, correlation, and linear regression. Results: According to the results, shouting and cursing by patients and their companions were determined as the most common type of violence encountered by healthcare professionals. The effect of healthcare professionals' exposure to violence from patients' companion on work engagement and witnessing to violence from colleagues on meaningful work were found to be negative and significant. Discussion: The findings emphasise the urgent need for interventions addressing workplace violence against healthcare professionals. Since workplace violence significantly reduces work engagement and the sense of meaningful work in healthcare setting. Impact: By highlighting the prevalence of workplace violence and its negative impact on both work engagement and meaningful work in healthcare setting, this study provides critical evidence for policymakers and healthcare administrators. Patient or Public Contribution: The participants in this study were healthcare professionals who had direct contact with patients and their relatives.

Crafting gender into meaningful work: experiences of women engaging in social entrepreneurship in China

Gender in Management, JCR Q3 [see online](#)

Abstract: Purpose: Social entrepreneurship, leveraging economic activities to achieve social benefits, offers women the opportunity to freely and actively shape the contours of their work in meaningful ways. This study aims to examine how Chinese women use job crafting in social entrepreneurship to align their gender identity, forge meaningful work and new relationships and navigate mixed gender expectations. Design/methodology/approach: The study is based on 19 in-depth interviews with young women engaging in social entrepreneurship in China. Using a grounded theory approach, the study explores how women craft their gender identity into the unconventional career path of creating their social venture, focusing on the creative combination of task, relational and cognitive crafting in shaping social entrepreneurship. Findings: The findings suggest that women make social entrepreneurship meaningful by actively aligning their gender experiences to delineate a relational and cognitive causal path between their social enterprise, their identity as women and their moral values. By working for a larger social cause, women may cognitively reframe their gender identity to compromise financial performance for social impact. Originality/value: Current studies on social entrepreneurship in China have yet to examine its development through a gender lens. This study uses job crafting to highlight the distinctive gender meaning-making process for Chinese women to enhance their work identity and to challenge normative gender expectations. The study shows that job crafting enables women to view their social ventures as a means of gender empowerment, helping them to reconcile the paradoxical pressures of normative gender expectations and scaling up their businesses.

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Social entrepreneurship's emphasis on creating social value over making profits has emerged as a widely celebrated career path to pursue meaningful work

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The Meaning and Purpose of Work: An Interdisciplinary Framework for Considering What Work is For

Taylor and Francis, [see online](#)

Abstract: Two seminal crises of the early 21st century - the 9/11 terrorist attacks and COVID-19 pandemic - have led emerging generations of workers to prioritize the meaning and purpose of work. At the same time, other social and environmental crises are threatening, capitalism is evolving, and technology is advancing. In this book, a philosopher and organizational psychologist who together research meaningful work consider what these forces mean for whether work might give meaning and purpose to our lives or take it away. The authors introduce key concepts - meaning, purpose, and work, among others - and consider how they show up in individuals' experience of work, what role organizations play in cultivating them, and the responsibilities of markets and states to the individuals and organizations working within them. Each chapter includes questions and prompts for review and reflection for students and workers who read the book. The final chapter concludes by introducing an original "6 P" framework for making sense of the functional and moral purpose of work among individuals, organizations, and systems: to pursue and perform, provide and produce, and price and protect work. Readers will emerge with an understanding of the meaning of meaning as well as a practical appreciation for the role of meaning in their own work, the managerial responsibilities they may have for serving the purpose of the organization they work for, and the societal challenges that make the quest for meaningful work a timely imperative.

Articles (6)

Research: How Regulatory Changes Can Hurt Workers' Motivation

Tim Kundro, Natalie Croitoru & Beth Anne Helgason, HBR [see online](#)

In our polarized political landscape, employees increasingly find that they hold moral beliefs that conflict with the laws and regulations they are subject to at work. New research suggests that when workers feel this conflict between their moral beliefs and legal regulations, they're less likely to take problems into their own hands, raise suggestions to improve work procedures, or champion new ideas. But how workers and employers frame the purpose of these regulations may make a difference.

“ Research has found that employees with a strong moral purpose experience greater meaning at work and devote greater effort to their jobs. ”

How to Compassionately Manage an Employee with a Terminal Illness

Chidiebere Ogbonnaya, Vijay Pereira, Benjamin Laker, Mayowa Babalola & William Degbey, HBR [see online](#)

Managing an employee with a terminal illness requires a balance of compassion and strategic action. When an employee receives a terminal diagnosis continuing to work might offer them a sense of normalcy and purpose. As the illness becomes a part of their daily life, work can be a respite by helping them maintain social connections and feel productive. Managers in this situation should follow three interlinked strategies: First, support your terminally ill employee by adapting the work environment to their needs, such as flexible hours or remote work, and involve them in decisions about their role adjustments. This shows respect and ensures they feel valued. Second, maintain team morale by balancing honesty with sensitivity and facilitating opportunities for the team to express their feelings. Finally, ensure business continuity by helping the employee document key responsibilities, create a transition plan, and involve the team in the transition process.

Redefining P&L: The impact of purpose-driven leadership on people and lives

Adrian Cronje, Fast Company [see online](#)

The article explains that true purpose in business lies in creating meaningful impact, exemplified by transforming clients' lives. It argues that leaders must focus on “people and lives” over profits, fostering motivation and fulfillment. It states that purpose-driven leadership enhances teamwork and client relationships, encouraging an infinite mindset focused on continual growth. It defends that purpose aligns individual goals with organizational aspirations, boosting retention and success. Finally, it emphasizes that leaders should prioritize impact over size, inspiring teams and redefining success by building lasting value and making a profound difference.

People Who Keep Company Secrets Find More Meaning at Work

Martinez J., HBR [see online](#)

This interview with Columbia Business School's Michael Slepian explores how confidentiality at work affects employee well-being. Slepian and his co-researchers found that while keeping secrets can lead to stress and frustration, it also gives employees a sense of importance and status, making their work feel more meaningful. The study highlighted the balance between the negative and positive effects of maintaining organizational secrets and the importance of context in this dynamic.

Finding Purpose In Your Work

Nell Derick Debevoise, Forbes [see online](#)

The article discusses how not-for-profit work, despite its good intentions, often fails to meet community needs due to misaligned approaches. It shares an example of a youth center in Palestine, where rigid funding requirements hindered local efforts. The author emphasizes the importance of understanding cultural context, adapting strategies, and practicing empathy and self-awareness. Reflecting on personal leadership mistakes, the article argues that meaningful outcomes and purpose can be achieved in any job with the right approach.

Purpose and work are not mutually exclusive: Find meaning and a paycheck at your job

Chris Farrell, The Minnesota Star Tribune [see online](#)

The article explains Nobel laureate Edmund Phelps' view that work is central to life, combining purpose and economic participation. It states that Studs Terkel's *Working* highlights the search for meaning and dignity alongside income. It discusses Christopher Michaelson and Jennifer Tosti-Kharas' book, *Is Your Work Worth It?*, which explores meaningful work. The authors argue that reflecting on work's long-term impact helps align purpose with contribution. It concludes that understanding the "why" behind work integrates personal finances with a greater sense of purpose.



Articles (2)

Why Purpose-Driven Companies Should Focus on Their Hybrid Work Culture

Jennifer Piette, Sustainable Brands [see online](#)

The article discusses the challenges of hybrid work and how purpose-driven companies are adapting. It highlights successful practices from Narrative Food and ZaaS. Narrative Food's coffee-break-in-a-box service creates connection for remote teams by offering thoughtfully curated snacks and beverages. ZaaS, led by Maryam Sharifzadeh, organizes cooking demos for hybrid teams, allowing employees to bond over shared experiences. The article emphasizes that building a healthy hybrid culture requires ongoing effort, thoughtful practices, and resources to maintain employee engagement and inclusion in both remote and in-person settings.

“ A purpose-driven company needs a compassionate, caring, nurturing environment ”

The logo for ZaaS, featuring the letters 'ZaaS' in a stylized, dark purple font.

Executing global purpose strategy with local impact with Alma Alejandro



Becky Willan, Given [listen online](#)

Having the right global purpose strategy to create change is essential. But how do you make sure it also has local impact? In this podcast, Becky Willan is joined by Alma Alejandro, Marketing Director for Global Intimate Health and Wellness Brands at Kimberley Clark. In the conversation, they will be exploring how to drive global impact with the right global purpose strategy and how to demonstrate results.

The logo for Kimberly-Clark, featuring a blue circular icon with a white stylized star or flower shape, followed by the text 'Kimberly-Clark' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

