

# Purpose: A practical guide

How to bring purpose to your organisation  
for a competitive advantage

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# About this guide

Imagine if everyone in your workplace felt that what your company does really mattered – to the world, their colleagues and themselves. How much more successful would you collectively be?

Earlier this year, LinkedIn and Imperative released the *2016 Global Report on Purpose at Work*. It explored *purpose-driven talent*, examining the benefits of purpose across industry, geography and generations.

Building on the momentum of that report, this guide goes on to explore purpose-driven companies and how they bring meaning to work.

You'll learn practical ways to instil purpose at your organisation, and gain a competitive advantage in talent acquisition, engagement and management.

At LinkedIn we contribute to the purpose dialogue in two main ways. First, what purpose means in the context of talent. Second, what our data says about the issues. To compile this guide, we interviewed dozens of purpose-driven companies on their talent strategies. We also conducted multiple surveys with thousands of recruiters. To round out the research, we compared samples of over a thousand companies, five million members, almost one million jobs, and half a million hires.

The learnings are all here. We hope these insights help you and your company on your journey.

*'Companies that understand the increasing emphasis of purpose in today's professional landscape improve their ability to attract such employees and also their ability to retain them for longer periods of time.'*



Reid Hoffman

Executive Chairman and co-founder,  
LinkedIn

# Purpose

**Connecting** people  
with work that matters to them,  
and to companies that are  
driving meaningful impact.

# Purpose is a key driver of business success


The findings in this guide  
are essential for:



01  
Companies looking to  
use purpose to gain a  
competitive advantage.

02  
Talent acquisition professionals  
looking to find and recruit  
stronger candidates.

03  
Managers seeking powerful  
ways to engage, inspire and  
keep employees.

A close-up portrait of Darren Walker, President of Ford Foundation, smiling and wearing glasses, a blue shirt, and a red polka-dot tie. The background is dark and out of focus.

# What is your company's purpose?

What it means to be a purpose-driven company

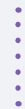
# Defining an experience of purpose.

Anyone can experience purpose.

Purpose includes three core elements:



Positive **impact**  
on others



Personal **growth**  
and development



Delivery of work  
through strong **relationships**

## Purpose-driven professionals

## Purpose-driven companies

### Why we work

Prioritise work that matters to them, their company and the world – over money or advancement.

Have an aspirational reason for being grounded in humanity that is stated and measured.

### How we work

Choose **jobs** that offer:



Positive impact on others



Personal growth



Delivery through relationships

Create a **culture** that encourages:



Positive impact on others



Personal growth



Delivery through relationships



# Some of the world's most successful companies are purpose driven:<sup>1</sup>



## Example purpose statements



To draw global attention to stories that connect us.



To share stories that matter, amuse, inform and inspire.



To democratise access to space for the benefit of life on earth.



To create freedoms for customers without access to power.



Believing community extends beyond the places where we have stores.

<sup>1</sup> Note: Example companies the authors are inspired by. We have only audited some of them for compliance with the definition of a purpose company, including: IDEO, Nike, Cancer Research UK, LinkedIn, SolarCity, Southwest, Clif, GOOD, Airbnb, Fitbit, Patagonia, Cisco, and EY.

# Is your company purpose driven?

Purpose-driven companies use the three core elements to create exceptional experiences for employees. Based on this definition, ask yourself the questions below. You can also look at Airbnb's responses for inspiration.

	Question	
<b>Why</b> you work	Is your reason for being grounded in humanity?	For travellers to belong anywhere.
	Is your purpose stated and measured?	Caters for 60 million guests in over 34,000 cities and 191 countries.
<b>How</b> you work	Do you have jobs or a culture that create an experience of purpose?	Purposeful work is one of five pillars of its employee experience.
	Do you connect employees' work to the positive impact it has on others?	Monthly credits enable employees to visit listings and experience the belonging they create.
	Do you encourage employees in their personal and professional development?	Helps every employee be a host: authentic, humble, and focused on others. This helps talent advance their lives and build better relationships.
	Do you foster authentic relationships at work?	Encourages employees to add to its culture, not fit into it. Often holds celebrations of employee diversity.

# Myth busting

Purpose has exploded in the vocabulary of business.

A recent report found that 'public discourse about "corporate/organisational purpose" has increased fivefold since 1994, and is now trending at an exponential rate that surpasses the rate of public discourse about sustainability.'<sup>2</sup>

With so much dialogue on this topic, it's important to create clarity around exactly what purpose is – and isn't.

Here are some of the most common misperceptions about purpose.

<sup>2</sup> The state of the debate on purpose in business, EY Beacon Institute, 2016

## Myth 1

### *Purpose is just the new word for mission.*

**Purpose** is *why* you are in business. It is aspirational and inspiring, and its goal is to create a shared vision. Purpose isn't something to be achieved. Purpose defines the mission, values, and culture of a company, and it has a wider scope.

**Mission** is *what* businesses do. It should be measurable, achievable, and aligned with purpose.

**Values** are *how* an organisation makes day-to-day decisions. They are aligned with purpose, but are not the purpose itself.

**Culture** is the sum of these practices. When purpose, mission, and values are aligned, so is the culture.

Tip: To find your company's purpose, start with your founder's story. Why did they start the company? Most often, the answer is more than just to make money.

## Myth 2

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### *Purpose is the same as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).*

Purpose is the full company working towards solving meaningful world problems. CSR and sustainability are often dedicated teams that work on specific social good or environmental efforts on behalf of the company.

The employee experience of CSR is often delivered outside of the business, through volunteering or by donating a percentage of time or money. In contrast, purpose is more integrated into every employee's day-to-day experience and business.

## Myth 3

# *Companies that focus on profit are not purpose driven. Purpose is purely about social impact.*

There is no conflict between purpose and profit – particularly when profit is used to scale impact. In fact, being purpose driven brings measurable commercial benefits.

Having a positive impact on others is one of the three core elements of a purpose experience. However, there are many ways to help others in a meaningful way. Tesla's purpose, for example, is to accelerate the advancement of sustainable transport. Indiegogo helps people get their passion funded. Virgin Galactic exists to democratise access to space for the benefit of life on earth.

All three companies are purpose driven and for profit at the same time. Not-for-profit or social impact companies are typically thought of as purpose driven – although this isn't always the case. Kiva is a good example of a purpose-driven, non-profit, social impact company whose purpose is to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty.

Not-for-profit or social impact companies are typically thought of as purpose driven, and often are. For example, Kiva is a non-profit company whose purpose is to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty. However, as our definition describes, an aspirational reason for being is not enough to be a purpose company. They must also have a culture of purpose for employees, and not all not-profits deliver that.

### The Millennial view<sup>3</sup>

The vast majority of Millennials (95%) see no conflict between purpose and wealth creation.

While they feel that wealth creation is important, 75% of Millennials

also think that businesses should be more focused on helping to improve society. Four out of five Millennials believe that business, rather than government, has a vital role to play in solving our social and environmental challenges.

A man with short dark hair, wearing a grey blazer over a white shirt and dark blue trousers, is sitting on a wooden stool. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. His hands are clasped in his lap. He is wearing a watch on his left wrist. The background is a plain, light grey wall.

# Your business case for purpose

How purpose gives you a competitive advantage  
in talent, branding and the bottom line

The most admired companies are finding success at the intersection of profit and purpose.

Purpose gives you

Stronger talent + Stronger talent acquisition + Stronger talent management + Stronger organisational structures + Stronger brands

=

Stronger business results



# Purpose-driven professionals are your most valuable talent.

For nearly every organisation, talent is the number one driver of success. What's now clear is that attracting and hiring purpose-driven professionals has a significant business impact.

LinkedIn and Imperative's *2016 Global Report on Purpose at Work* is the largest study on the role of purpose in the workforce. Surveying 26,000 LinkedIn members, it found that purpose-driven professionals consistently outperform their peers who work primarily for money or achievement.

Purpose-driven professionals:

Are **30%** more likely to be high performers<sup>4</sup>

Have **11%** longer tenure<sup>5</sup>

Are **50%** more likely to be in leadership positions<sup>6</sup>

Are **47%** more likely to be promoters of their employers<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Data based on correlation between purpose and performance for ~2000 employees at LinkedIn  
<sup>5</sup> LinkedIn and Imperative 2016 Global Report on Purpose at Work  
<sup>6&7</sup> Imperative 2015 U.S. Purpose Index study

# Purpose-driven companies have better talent outcomes.

To find out how purpose influences talent acquisition and management, LinkedIn compared [GameChangers'](#) list of 500 purpose-driven companies with 500 randomly selected LinkedIn member companies matched on industry and size.

## Methodology<sup>8</sup>

We compared talent outcomes of over one thousand companies, three million members, almost one million jobs, and half a million hires, through the lens of LinkedIn data. To double check the results, we repeated the comparison methodology with a different list of purpose companies, the Fit for Purpose 2015 index of the 100 brands best placed to put purpose into practice.

The conclusion was the same for both the GameChangers 500 and Fit for Purpose lists: **Purpose brings a competitive advantage across every stage of the career journey.**

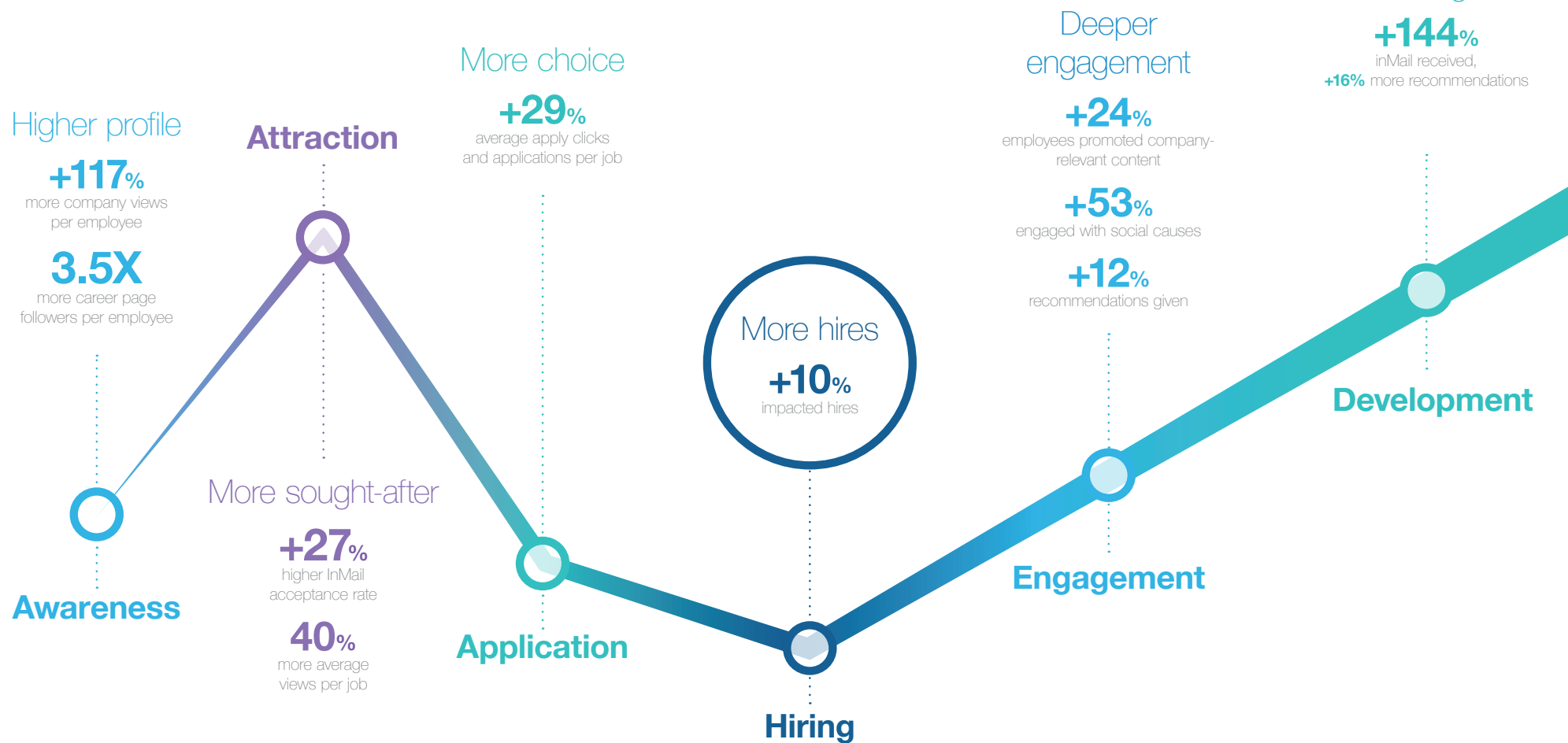


## FIT FOR PURPOSE 2015

<sup>8</sup> Analysis based on 500 purpose company employees (listed in GameChanger 500 report) vs. 500 control sample company employees. The control sample companies were randomly-selected based on LinkedIn company pages matching GameChanger 500 company sizes and industries. The analysis was carried out on employee's LinkedIn profile information as of August 2016. The analysis represents the world seen through the lens of LinkedIn data.

# Purpose-driven companies have better talent outcomes.

LinkedIn activity for 500 purpose-driven companies, compared with 500 companies matched on industry and size showed:










Purpose-driven  
companies performed  
better at every stage  
of the candidate journey.

Imagine the  
cumulative effect of  
these improvements  
for your talent.

# Purpose improves organisational results.

The EY Beacon Institute led purpose-minded companies to define 5 ways you can use purpose for organisational benefits.<sup>9</sup>

Organisational benefits	Take action	Examples
<p>Purpose instils strategic clarity</p>	<p>Use purpose as a guide for daily decision making and a lens for long-term decision making, particularly in times of transformation and rising expectations.</p>	<p> <b>Tesla</b> decided to share its portfolio to advance electric vehicle technology as a long-term market strategy.</p>
<p>Purpose channels innovation</p>	<p>Use purpose to frame creativity and innovation and maintain focus on customer needs (rather than on a product).</p>	<p> <b>Dove's</b> purpose: to make every woman in the world feel comfortable with her appearance rather than sell more soap. Revenue grew from \$2.4b to \$4b in last decade.</p>
<p>Purpose taps a universal need</p>	<p>Use purpose to motivate and unite a diverse team through a common desire to contribute to a meaningful goal.</p>	<p> <b>Procter &amp; Gamble's</b> former CMO Jim Stengel found that purpose 'unifies R&amp;D and engineering and marketing and sales and everyone around the difference they are trying to make.'</p>
<p>Purpose is a response to transformation</p>	<p>Keep purpose at the forefront of transformation to help people understand the long-term context of short-term changes – and to ensure the focus of change is positive and inspiring.</p>	<p> <b>Bupa Arabia</b> realised its purpose was more about healthcare than insurance, helping the company grow from 50k customers in 2013 to 750k in 2014.</p>
<p>Purpose builds bridges</p>	<p>In the context of a commercial collaboration such as joint ventures or mergers and acquisitions, a clearly stated purpose can help demonstrate cultural alignment between potential partners.</p>	<p> Due to purpose, <b>Unilever's</b> CEO found that 'more suppliers want to work with us now because it energises their employees and business models as well.'</p>

<sup>9</sup> The state of the debate on purpose in business, EY Beacon Institute, 2016.

# Purpose builds stronger consumer brands.

In study of over 7,000 consumers published in the Harvard Business Review, 64% of consumers said that shared values are the primary reason they have a relationship with a brand<sup>10</sup> – making values by far the largest driver of brand relationships.

This preference impacts on purchasing behaviour. A separate study found that 80% of consumers would rather pay more for products and services that are produced responsibly<sup>11</sup>. Globally, 89% of consumers have said there is a strong likelihood they would buy from companies that support solutions to particular social issues – and purpose as a reason to buy rose 26% between 2008 and 2012.<sup>12</sup>

Boston consulting company Brighthouse has tips to use purpose to transform a brand into a stand:

## Brand + Purpose = Stand

A brand	A stand
What	Why
Point of difference	Point of view
Market driven	Ethically driven
Competitive	Distinctive
Employees	Missionaries
Consumers	Advocates
Ads	Actions
Next quarter	Next quarter century
Loyalty	Love

*“The brands that will thrive in the coming years are the ones that have a purpose beyond profit.”*<sup>13</sup>

Richard Branson

*“A brand is not so much about rational arguments, but the way that the company resonates with people emotionally. Marketing is about values.”*<sup>14</sup>

Steve Jobs

<sup>10</sup> [hbr.org/2012/05/three-myths-about-customer-eng](http://hbr.org/2012/05/three-myths-about-customer-eng)

<sup>11</sup> Trust and Purpose Survey 2011, Burson-Marsteller, 2011

<sup>12</sup> The 2012 goodpurpose® study, Edelman annual global research

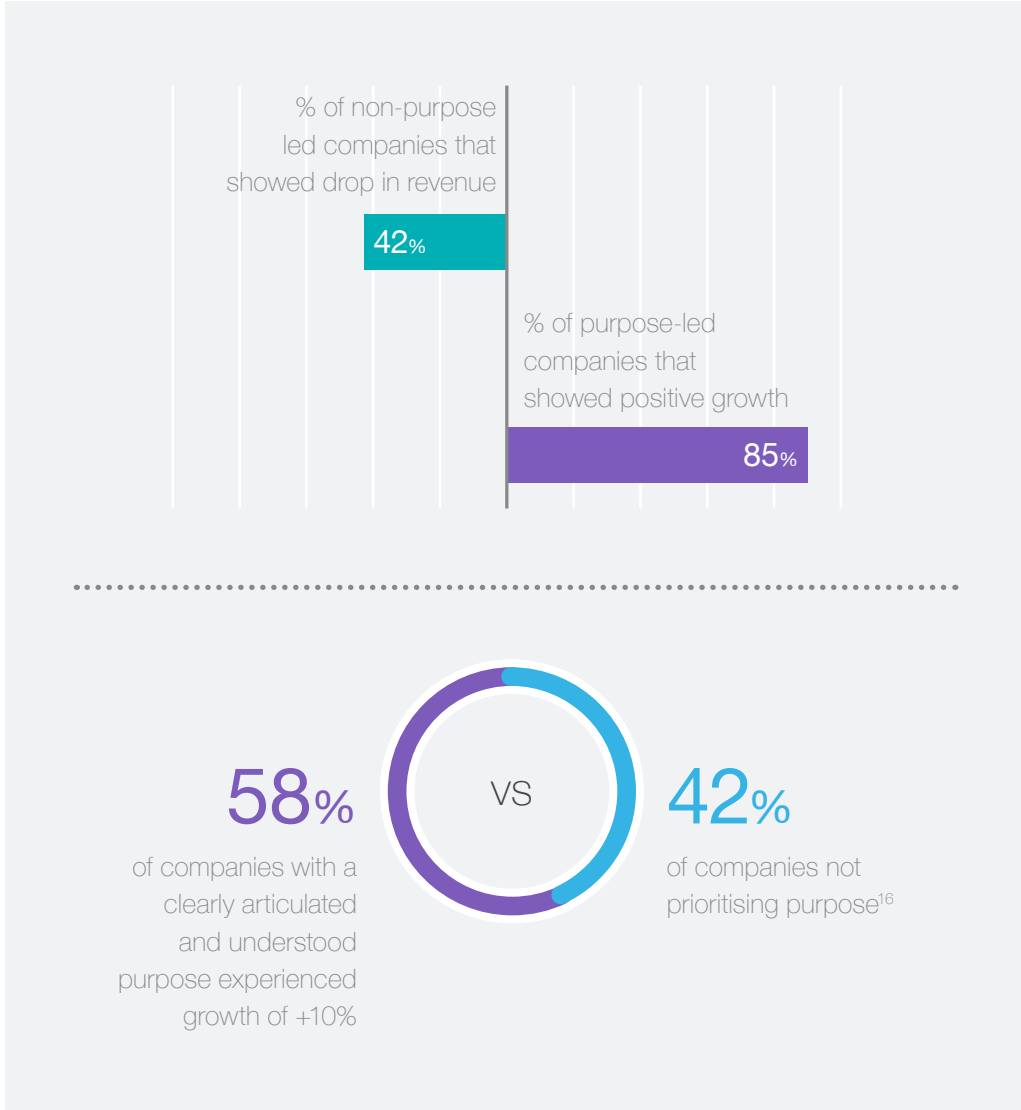
<sup>13</sup> [www.virgin.com/entrepreneur/steve-jobs-richard-branson-guy-kawasaki-talk-branding](http://www.virgin.com/entrepreneur/steve-jobs-richard-branson-guy-kawasaki-talk-branding)

<sup>14</sup> [www.virgin.com/entrepreneur/steve-jobs-richard-branson-guy-kawasaki-talk-branding](http://www.virgin.com/entrepreneur/steve-jobs-richard-branson-guy-kawasaki-talk-branding)

# The combined advantages of purpose drive profit.

Leading with purpose encourages stronger performance across brands, talent and organisational agility. The result is measurable business impact.

87% percent of executives believe they perform best over time if purpose goes beyond profit,<sup>15</sup> and this perception is backed up by results. Research from the EY Beacon Institute and Harvard Business School shows that companies that lead with purpose are more likely to be profitable.



15&16 The state of the debate on purpose in business, EY Beacon Institute, 2016



# Supply and demand in the purpose talent marketplace



# Purpose-driven companies are in demand.

Talent places a higher value on purpose-driven companies. Yet there are a limited number of companies that are purpose-led. This combination of high demand and limited supply gives purpose-driven companies a double advantage in the talent marketplace.

In a recent LinkedIn survey, nearly half said they would consider taking a job with lower pay if it meant they could work for a company that makes a positive impact on people's lives and society.



**Purpose-led companies don't pay less for their talent. They attract better talent with the same salary.**

While purpose-driven professionals are willing to sacrifice salary for purpose, they don't have to. Imperative's 2015 Workforce Purpose Index found that purpose-driven professionals have similar salaries to their non-purpose peers.<sup>18</sup>

In addition, our fulfillment survey showed no correlation between the salary professionals are willing to give up to work in a purpose-driven environment, and their income level. In other words, purpose isn't something that only highly paid professionals 'buy'.

<sup>17</sup> LinkedIn Fulfillment Study 2016 – survey conducted among 3,000 professionals and 500 recruiters/HR professionals in the UK in July  
<sup>18</sup> Imperative 2015 U.S. Purpose Index study

## Talent believes there is a limited supply of purpose-driven companies.

Purpose-driven companies are sought-after employers. However, professionals believe that only a third of the companies that they would consider working for can offer an experience of purpose at work.<sup>19</sup>

In a survey of over 600 LinkedIn members, 16% of respondents said that the main barrier to them pursuing a more rewarding career is an inability to find an employer whose purpose matches their own.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup>&<sup>20</sup> Results from February 2016 Omnibus survey of U.S. professionals.

# There is demand amongst recruiters for purpose-driven talent.

Recruiters believe a sense of purpose increases a candidate's value. They see a strong advantage in hiring candidates that share a company's values, mission or purpose:



.....  
With purpose-driven professionals reporting 64% higher fulfilment in their work, recruiters recognise that this has commercial benefits: 82% believe fulfilled employees are more productive.<sup>22</sup>

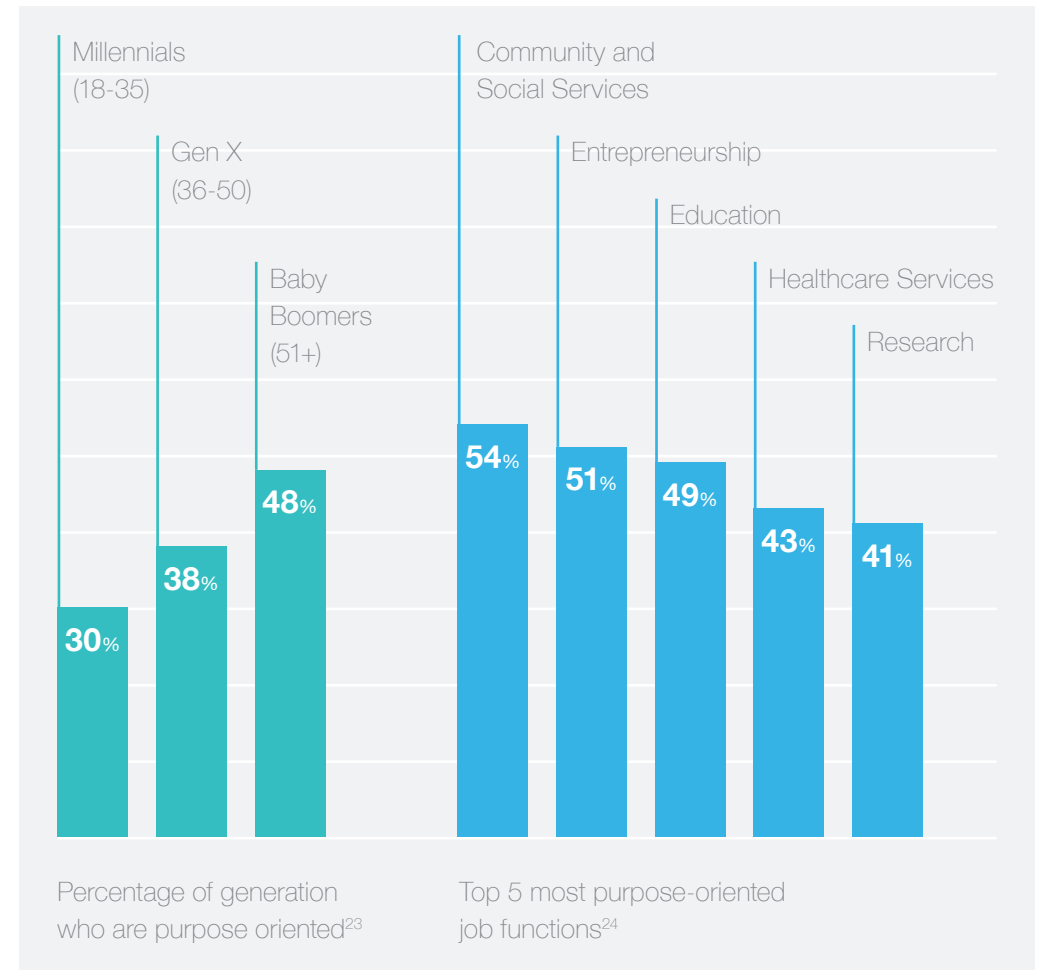
21&22 LinkedIn Fulfillment Study 2016 – survey conducted among 3,000 professionals and 500 recruiters/HR professionals in the UK in July

## However, there is a limited supply of purpose-driven professionals.

Representing just 37% of professionals, purpose-driven people are still the minority. As the value of a purpose-oriented talent becomes more evident, there will be more and more competition for this segment of the workforce.

It's interesting to note that purpose is not only owned by Millennials. Percentages of purpose-orientation actually increase across generation groups, with baby boomers leading the way.

For a full review of the supply of purpose-driven talent see the LinkedIn and Imperative [2016 Global Report on Purpose at Work](#)



<sup>23</sup>&<sup>24</sup> LinkedIn and Imperative 2016 Global Report on Purpose at Work

A man with a beard, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and dark tie, is sitting on a chair. He is looking down and to the right with a thoughtful expression. His hands are resting on his lap. The background is a plain, light grey wall.

# Attracting and selecting purpose-driven talent

# When asked the question: ‘Why work for us’, successful companies are answering with purpose.

Purpose-focused employment branding is a powerful tool. Here’s how you can use it to attract better talent.

Communicate your purpose.

**91%** of recruiters consider having a clear set of values, mission or purpose to be an important factor when attracting the best talent.<sup>25</sup>

**52%** of candidates say they wouldn’t accept a job offer if they didn’t know or didn’t agree with a company’s mission, values and purpose.<sup>26</sup>

Highlight purpose for all generations, including Millennials.

*“Today’s Millennials are just as interested in how a business develops its people and its contribution to society as they are in its products and profits.”<sup>27</sup>*

Barry Salzberg,  
CEO of Deloitte Global

Show how your company delivers the three core elements of an experience of purpose.



**Impact** on others – how your company makes the world a better place



Personal **development** – the opportunities you provide for personal growth

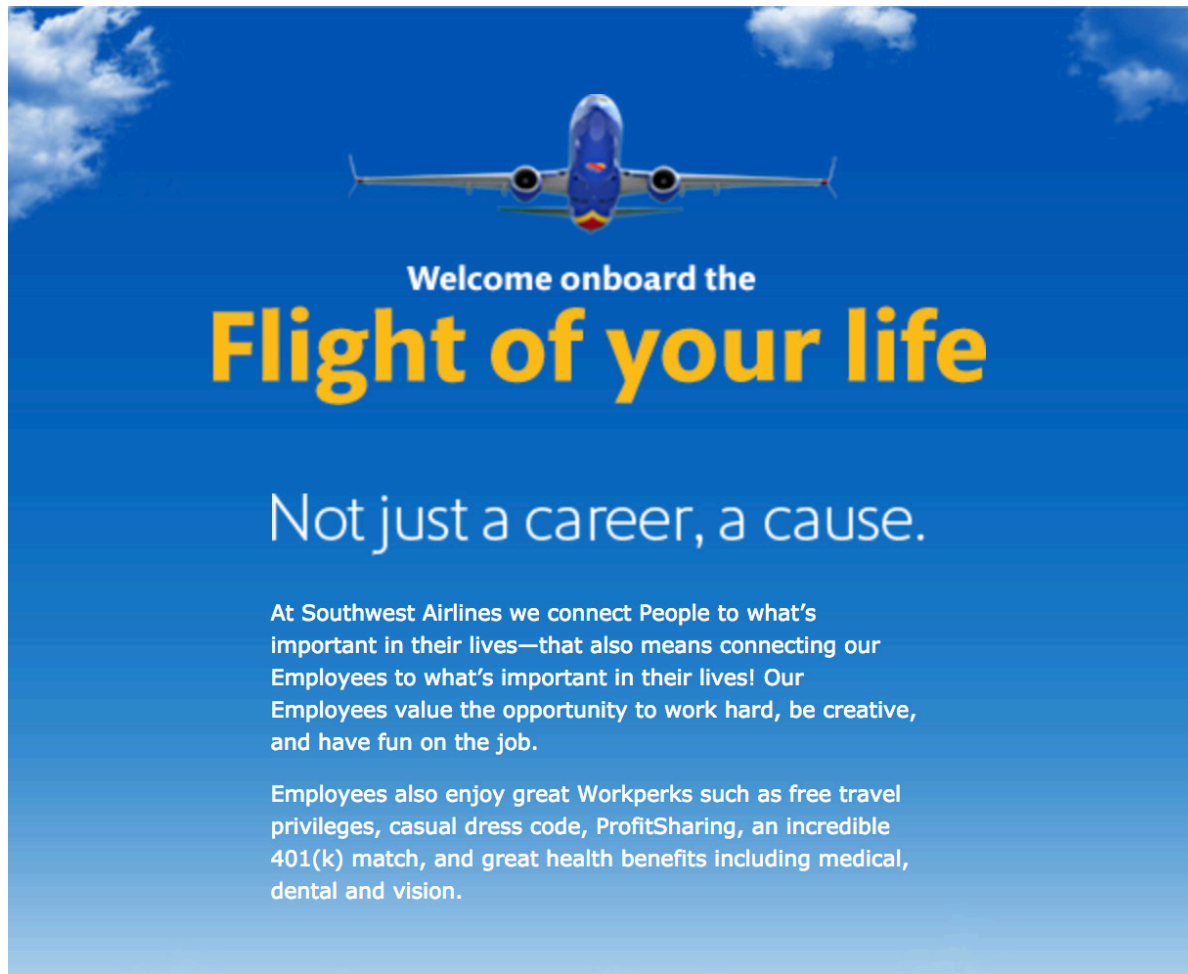


Delivery through **relationships** – how you encourage authentic relationships at work

25&26 LinkedIn Fulfillment Study 2016 - survey conducted among 3,000 professionals and 500 recruiters/HR professionals in the UK in July

27 Mind the Gaps – The 2015 Deloitte Millennial Survey

## Examples of purpose-focused employment branding:

A graphic for Southwest Airlines featuring a blue sky with white clouds and a Southwest airplane flying towards the viewer. The text is centered and reads: "Welcome onboard the Flight of your life" in large yellow and white font, followed by "Not just a career, a cause." in white. Below this is a paragraph of text: "At Southwest Airlines we connect People to what's important in their lives—that also means connecting our Employees to what's important in their lives! Our Employees value the opportunity to work hard, be creative, and have fun on the job." and another paragraph: "Employees also enjoy great Workperks such as free travel privileges, casual dress code, ProfitSharing, an incredible 401(k) match, and great health benefits including medical, dental and vision."/>

Welcome onboard the  
**Flight of your life**

Not just a career, a cause.

At Southwest Airlines we connect People to what's important in their lives—that also means connecting our Employees to what's important in their lives! Our Employees value the opportunity to work hard, be creative, and have fun on the job.

Employees also enjoy great Workperks such as free travel privileges, casual dress code, ProfitSharing, an incredible 401(k) match, and great health benefits including medical, dental and vision.

Welcome aboard the flight of your life.  
Not just a career, a cause.

At Southwest Airlines we connect People to what's important in their lives—that also means connecting our Employees to what's important in their lives! Our Employees value the opportunity to work hard, be creative, and have fun on the job.

Southwest frames its purpose by highlighting how it connects people and employees to the things that matter to them. It also clearly encourages strong relationships at work.

Notice the purpose language of 'not just a career a cause'.

## Take a purpose-focused approach to talent interviews and selection.

Purpose-driven companies get more followers and job applications. With a greater choice of talent, the key challenge for these companies is in selecting the most purpose-driven professionals.



of recruiters check whether candidates understand and agree with the organisation's values, mission or purpose during interviews.<sup>28</sup>



of recruiters would exclude otherwise suitable candidates from the hiring process if they didn't agree with the organisation's values, mission or purpose.<sup>29</sup>

### To use purpose in your selection:

Provide realistic job previews about how other employees experience purpose at work (see *GOOD portrait*, which explores how the company selects employees looking for macro-level purpose impact)

Invest in training hiring managers

28&29 LinkedIn Fulfillment Study 2016 – survey conducted among 3,000 professionals and 500 recruiters/HR professionals in the UK in July



## The best question to screen for purpose:

*‘What motivates you at work?’*

Hiring managers believe that when it comes to talent selection, soft skills (such as behavioural qualities and personality traits), are harder to find than hard skills (such as those learned in training).<sup>30</sup> They believe the best way to assess a candidate's soft skills is through interview questions.

30 LinkedIn May 2016 survey of 1,297 hiring managers in the US, Canada, UK Netherlands, Australia and India.

Hiring managers believe the best questions to screen for purpose are:

1

.....  
*“What motivates you at work?”*

2

.....  
*“What aspects of your work make you feel best?  
What makes you feel most useful or happy?”*

3

.....  
*“Think about a time when you adjusted the work you do to have more of a positive impact. What did you do? What did you want to accomplish?”*

## Example of purpose-focused selection:



Southwest employees are purpose-driven, and the company has very high hiring standards to protect that culture.

In a biennial survey, Southwest employees were asked if they feel like their role is 'just a job', 'a stepping stone', or 'a calling'. Nearly 75% of employees felt their role is 'a calling'.

In 2015, Southwest received 371,202 CVs and hired nearly 6,000 new employees. To ensure selection for purpose alignment is possible, the company often interviews more than 100 people to fill a single position.

*“Southwest doesn’t just hire for a good attitude and train for skill. It hires for a very, very specific attitude, often interviewing over 100 people for a single role.”*



## Using LinkedIn to leverage your company's purpose.

LinkedIn's tools can help you showcase your company's purpose, and find and select purpose-driven talent.

**LinkedIn**

**To attract**  
purpose-driven talent

LinkedIn Career Pages  
LinkedIn Referrals

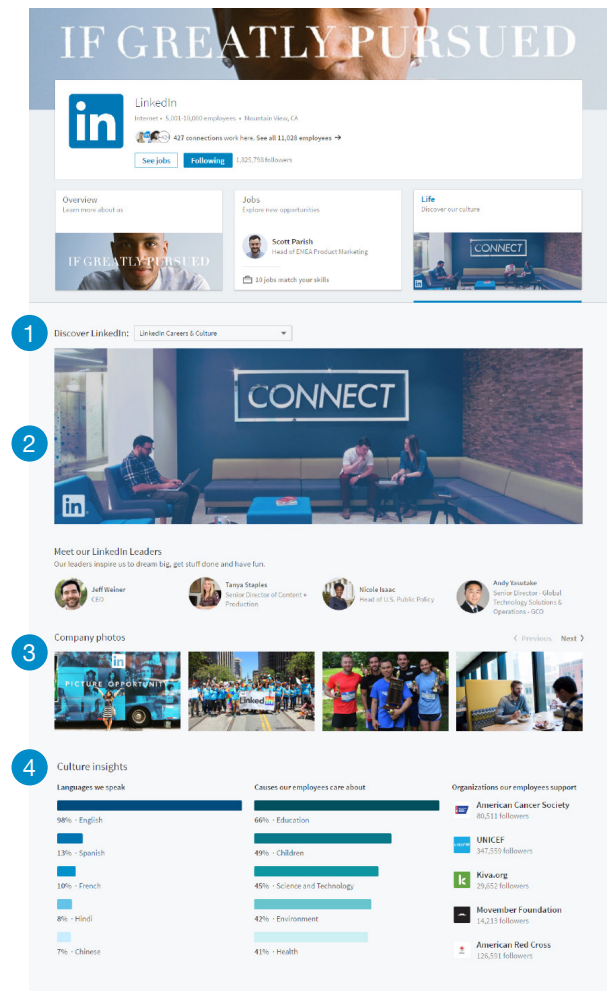
**To select**  
purpose-driven talent

LinkedIn Recruiter  
LinkedIn Jobs

# Showcase your purpose with LinkedIn Career Pages.

To help talent make the connection between your company and its purpose, consider using LinkedIn Career Pages:

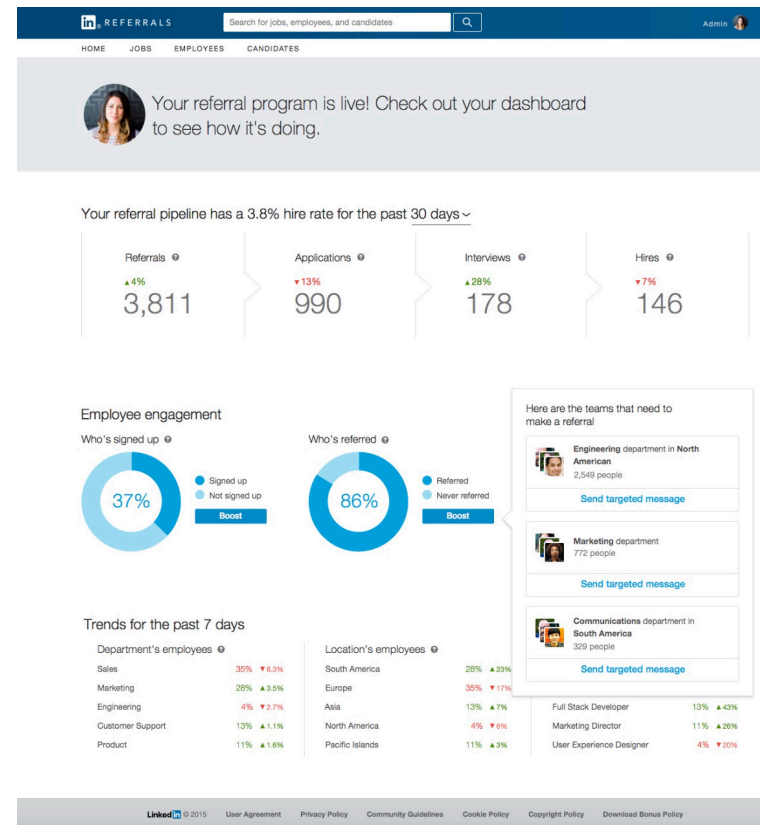
- 1 Communicate your experience of purpose more directly.** Consider creating targeted views focusing on your company's experience of purpose.
- 2 Use hero images, copy and video** that showcase your purpose and brand in an engaging and inspiring way.
- 3 Encourage employees to share their experience of purpose.** Employee voice is the most trusted source of information. Ask employees to share their experiences of purpose at work through photos and posts.
- 4 Showcase the causes that matter to your employees.** Use the automated company insights to showcase the causes your employees care about and the organisations they support.



# LinkedIn Referrals are a powerful way to recruit purpose-driven professionals.

In the talent marketplace, referrals are the number one source of quality hires, requiring less time to recruit and having a longer tenure. Through LinkedIn Referrals, employees can introduce candidates that share the company's sense of purpose.

While it can be hard to detect purpose on a CV, purpose-driven professionals are likely to know each other or network together. They report deeper relationships, and are 117% more likely to have 500+ connections<sup>31</sup>. Additionally, purpose-oriented talent is 47% more likely<sup>32</sup> to promote their employer, making it easier to get referrals.



31 Analysis based on 500 purpose company employees (listed in GameChanger 500 report) vs. 500 control sample company employees. The control sample companies were randomly selected based on LinkedIn company pages matching GameChanger 500 company sizes and industries. The analysis was carried out on employee connections from their LinkedIn profile as of August 2016. The analysis represents the world seen through the lens of LinkedIn data.

32 Imperative 2015 U.S. Purpose Index study

# Use LinkedIn Recruiter and Jobs to improve talent selection.

When it comes to job seeking, 69% of purpose-oriented employees are passive, versus 61% of their non-purpose peers.<sup>33</sup> LinkedIn Recruiter, which helps you connect with passive talent, is one of the best tools to help you find purpose-driven talent.

The top three factors that entice purpose-oriented people to accept a new job are:

.....

01 Culture and values

.....

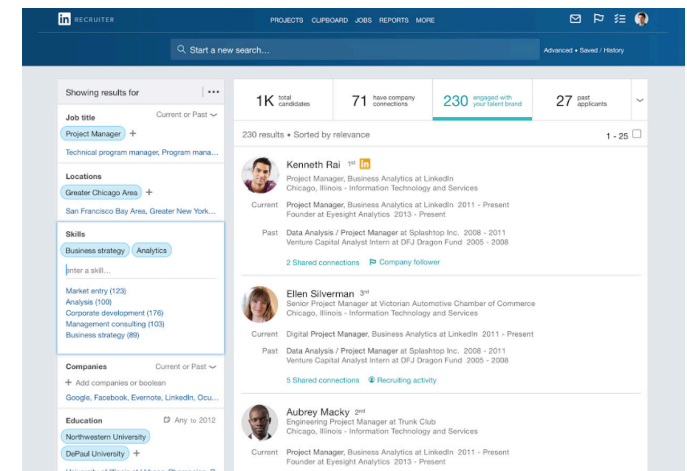
02 Mission and vision

.....

03 Products and services

To attract purpose-oriented professionals, focus more on these factors, and less on factors like advancement, rewards or titles.

LinkedIn and Imperative's *2016 Global Report on Purpose at Work* will help you to target the industries, job types and locations with the most purpose-driven talent.



LinkedIn members are significantly more purpose-driven. 40% of U.S. professionals on LinkedIn are purpose-driven, compared with 28% of the general workforce.<sup>34</sup>

33&34 LinkedIn and Imperative 2016 Global Report on Purpose at Work

A man in a dark blue suit, white shirt, and blue patterned tie stands against a blue background. He is wearing a gold Medal of Honor on his chest. The text "Creating employee experiences filled with purpose" is overlaid in white.

Creating employee  
experiences filled  
with purpose

# Purpose-filled employee experiences increase talent fulfillment, productivity and tenure.

Purpose-led companies create a culture of purpose by delivering the three core elements we introduced earlier in our definition of purpose-driven companies.

			
Purpose element	<b>Impact</b> on others	Personal <b>development</b>	Delivery through <b>relationships</b>
Action	Connect employees' work to the positive impact it has	Actively encourage employees in their development	Nurture authentic relationships

Click on an action to find out how they do this.



# Connecting work with impact.



With the division of tasks and use of technology in modern work, it's easy to become disconnected from the ultimate value we create. Purpose-driven companies are careful to reflect back to their employees how their work helps others.

Companies create these connections by sharing data and stories that bring their purpose to life, and by helping employees witness the impact of their work.



## Examples of connecting work with impact:



LinkedIn's purpose is to connect professionals with opportunities. We measure this purpose and use insights to connect people with the impact of their work.

At LinkedIn's annual Global Sales Kickoff we have a special session to celebrate helping 1.5M people find jobs. Employees are congratulated for changing lives and are encouraged to recount stories of the profound impact finding a job can have on someone. One story talked about LinkedIn helping 417,000 recent graduates find their first job. Employees are asked to remember their first job, how important it was, what an accomplishment it was, how it felt – a powerful, personal and emotional way to bring the purpose to life.



This video of a young man celebrating getting a life-changing job is shared with LinkedIn employees to remind us what our purpose, 'connect with opportunity' means for others.

## Examples of connecting work with impact:

# kiva

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Kiva exists to alleviate poverty by connecting people through lending. Most people join Kiva to help others, but with the company operating a digital platform with lenders and clients across the world, that experience could get lost. Instead, Kiva makes a deliberate effort to weave impact into the employee experience. Every other year the company funds an international trip for each employee to travel to a client and directly experience Kiva's impact. When they return, employees formally share the experience with their colleagues. This creates a consistent stream of powerful stories. The trip is repeated every second year to keep the emotional connection between purpose and work alive.



# Encourage personal and professional development.



Successful purpose-driven companies understand that employees need to project their own sense of purpose onto the organisation to create real ownership and alignment with the company's purpose. As a result, employees seek to develop personally and professionally in ways that will help them achieve their own purpose and improve their careers. Great cultures delivering purpose at work encourage and empower individuals to develop a strong orientation for learning.

## To connect learning to purpose:

.....  
Ask yourself what you can teach in a world-class way  
.....

Be clear about what employees will learn in your company that will help them throughout their career  
.....

Allow jobs to be tailored. For example, encourage role rotations or allow a percentage of time for personal projects or volunteering see Patagonia portrait  
.....

Remember that development isn't always about hard skills. Teaching employees how to work with values can have a big impact see Southwest portrait

## Examples of purposeful personal development:

# patagonia®

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Many people who work at Patagonia are passionate about spending time in the outdoors, and their personal purpose is to protect it. The company offers employees the ability to develop personally and professionally through an Environmental Internship Program. Employees from all parts of the company are allowed up to two months away from their regular roles to work for an environmental group of their choice while continuing to earn their paycheck and benefits.

In 2016, 34 individuals, 12 stores and one entire department volunteered 10,000 hours for 43 environmental organisations. When interns return, they bring back stories, inspiration and a new commitment to the environmental purpose of Patagonia.



# Examples of purposeful personal development:



Southwest Airlines University (SWA U) impacts all 50,000 Southwest Airlines employees each year. Every new employee experiences at least part of their training through SWA U, in addition to the ongoing leadership and development training they receive throughout their career. Here, the focus is on living and working with values, which the company calls the Southwest Way.

## Personal development the Southwest Way

<h3>A Warrior Spirit.</h3> <p>Southwest's early legal battles to earn the right to fly shaped its 'Warrior Spirit', which helps overcome the constant challenges of a competitive industry. It's taking pride in working hard. It's a desire to be the best.</p>	<h3>A Servant's Heart.</h3> <p>Southwest hires people who enjoy serving others. In essence, this mantra is treating others with respect, putting others first, demonstrating proactive customer service, and embracing the Southwest Family.</p>	<h3>A Fun-LUVing Attitude.</h3> <p>Southwest encourages humour and enjoyment, whether that's a joke-telling flight attendant, a pilot who waves at a child, or a CEO who dresses up for Halloween.</p>
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Learn to work with these values

# Lynda.com can help build a purpose culture with personal and professional development.



As research proves, a culture of learning and growth is great for business:

## Business outcomes from high-impact learning environments<sup>36</sup>



<sup>35</sup> Bersin & Associates, *High-Impact Learning Culture, The 40 Best Practices for Creating an Empowered Enterprise*  
<sup>36</sup> Imperative 2015 Workforce Purpose Index

According to 62% of learning and development professionals, managers lead the way when it comes to developing a learning culture<sup>35</sup> – so it's important that this segment of your workforce understands why and how to develop talent.

Organisations with high quality leadership programmes are 7.4% more likely to have highly engaged leaders who are inclined to stay with the organisation. Every leader needs to know how to coach, have good material, and set time aside to commit to coaching. Lynda is a great resource for strong teaching materials.

LinkedIn's Lynda.com is an excellent resource for strong teaching materials. Lynda.com is a leading online learning platform that provides thousands of online courses for targeted support in helping employees to reach their full potential. Lynda.com's content is taught by experts from the field, filmed in our studios and produced to the highest pedagogical standards. With every course accessible on demand, on any device to every employee, Lynda.com is designed to foster a culture of learning.

# Nurture strong and authentic relationships.



Purpose doesn't happen in a vacuum. By its very nature, an experience of purpose involves connection with others. Think back to your greatest work experiences: chances are, you had strong relationships around you.

Purpose-oriented employees are 50% more likely to report meaningful relationships with colleagues, customers and clients<sup>37</sup>. Not only are their relationships meaningful – they also have more of them. Employees in purpose-oriented companies are 117% more likely to 500+ connections on LinkedIn.

## To foster strong relationships at work:

Publicly recognise employees who invest in relationships – for example, those who coach others, organise team interactions, or care for co-workers  
see Southwest portrait

Encourage culture 'add', not just culture 'fit', so employees can bring their authentic self to work  
see LinkedIn portrait

Use collaborative purpose experiences as a perk  
see Cisco portrait

37 Imperative 2015 Workforce Purpose Index



## Example of delivery through authentic relationships:

# patagonia®

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Patagonia describes itself as 'the activist company'. It uses collective action as a way to foster strong bonds and real relationships between employees and the wider community. After all, activism is inherently social.

Employees experience standing for something they believe in together. These are powerful moments that follow them back into the office and make work feel purposeful. Patagonia even has a stated policy that the company will bail employees out of jail for activist-related detention. Now that is certainly supporting employees to stand behind their purpose.



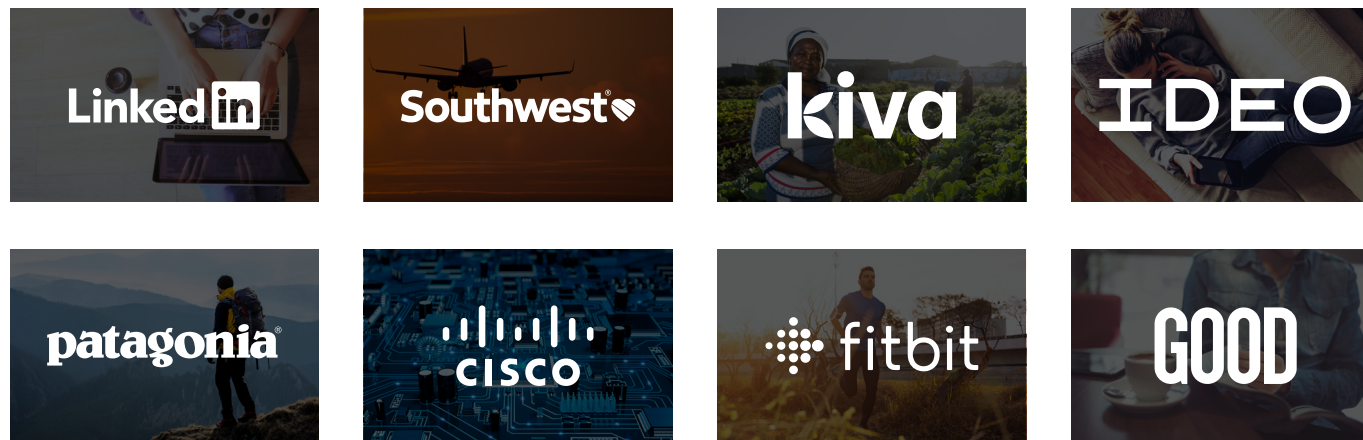
A man with short dark hair, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt, stands behind a large wooden barrel. On the barrel are two bottles of Hattingley Valley wine. The bottle on the left is labeled 'HATTINGLEY VALLEY CLASSIC CUVÉE 2013' and the bottle on the right is labeled 'HATTINGLEY VALLEY ROSE'. The background is a dark, solid color.

# Practical strategies to improve talent outcomes

Eight companies that lead with purpose –  
and how they do it

We interviewed talent acquisition and management leaders from eight of the world's most admired purpose-driven companies. We asked for practical tips in bringing purpose to employment branding and selection, and in creating an experience of purpose for employees.

Click a company to view its portrait.



# Conclusion

When we define our company's purpose, we understand and share its reason for existing beyond simply making money. By acting on and measuring this purpose, we can see a positive impact on employees, communities and the world.

Purpose isn't just for the noble few. Far from being in conflict with profit, being purpose driven has a significant business impact. Employees that feel connected to an experience of purpose are more satisfied, more productive and more likely to stay longer. What's more, when a company leads with purpose it is more likely to attract purpose-driven talent – the most valuable segment of today's workforce.

By following the practical steps set out in this guide, you can use purpose to gain a competitive advantage:

1. **Define your purpose.** Look to your founder's reason for creating the company. Talk to employees and customers. Set your purpose as an 'aspirational reason for being grounded in humanity'.
2. **State and measure your purpose.** With customers and employees watching, you're more likely to deliver. Evidence shows an unauthentic purpose is more damaging than no purpose.
3. **Embed purpose in your employment brand** to attract purpose-driven professionals. Employment brands work best when they are aligned with consumer brands, so let purpose resonate throughout your company.
4. **Select professionals whose purpose aligns with your company's.** Look for those that see work as a way to find fulfilment.
5. **Create an experience of purpose** for employees by focusing on three core elements:



Positive impact on others



Personal growth and development



Delivery of work through strong relationships

# About LinkedIn Talent Solutions

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