

Highlights from C&C meeting – 10 March 2020

What we covered:

“Leaders in all walks of life – in politics, the media and business – have a choice about what they appeal to in other people. Do they appeal to their fear, their greed, their selfishness, or do they appeal to their generosity, their desire to contribute, their selflessness? The kind of society we end up with depends a lot on that choice which leaders make.” Václav Havel

Charles Wookey our CEO gave a brief overview of the thinking behind Blueprint, what makes a ‘purpose-led’ business as opposed to a business that simply has a purpose and some do’s and don’ts – he has summarised this in his recent blog: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/putting-purpose-practice-5-donts-3-dos-charles-wookey>

Exercise 1 – we discussed: *What is it that most resonated with you from what Charles said? What is your work in service of? What are you seeking to achieve in the world through your work? What is your top fear / challenge?*

Dee Corrigan, who leads on our work with corporates shared some insights from the work we have been doing with some large businesses:

- The importance of CEO and senior leadership buy-in, but with the awareness that there can be a potential ‘shadow side’ of too much focus on the CEO – if the rest of the leadership team and business are not on the same page and not speaking truth to power
- The challenges around integrating the work companies are doing on CSR, sustainability or responsible business with their core business strategy – so that the positive social and environmental impact that arises from the company’s activities arises from the core business succeeding not through doing activities ‘on the side’
- Some organisations have an action addiction and move into action without really fundamentally challenging their underlying assumptions about business and people, this can lead to a series of great changes but no real underlying change, whilst others can get paralysed by the broad holistic nature of this work combined with the uncertainty in which all businesses are operating and spend a lot of time navel-gazing. We need to meet the organisation where they are and challenge and support in the right areas to help achieve a balance.
- How hidden assumptions and limiting beliefs can hold organisations back from courageous change. And how we have found it helpful to think about these in these three ways:
 - Capability – we can’t do this (e.g. we lack investment, people, skills, our organisation is decentralised)
 - Value – it’s not worth doing, they have not developed a belief that what is better for society and better for people is also better for business, there are fundamental trade-offs (e.g. doesn’t make good business sense, too much effort)
 - Identity – it’s not for us to do (e.g. it’s not the role of our business to do)

Exercise 2 – we discussed: *What are some of the assumptions / limiting beliefs that might be holding your clients back from making the change they need to make? What might some of the unintended consequences of your work be? How does having awareness of these help you drive the change I want to see your clients making?*