

Blueprint Learning Evaluation

Final Report

24th June 2021

Sustainability Advisory Oy
Helsinki, Finland



Executive summary

Introduction

- A Blueprint for better business is a UK-based charity established in 2014. Blueprint commissioned Sustainability Advisory to conduct a learning evaluation to assess the impact it has made in changing corporate mindsets and behaviours. A total of 28 interviews were carried out with corporates, donors, academia, investors, peers, etc., and relevant documents reviewed. The evaluation concluded in June 2021.

Main findings

1. Blueprint's strategy and theory of change inform a distinct and potentially transformational approach to making businesses more purposeful. Blueprint's Framework and 5 Principles are authentic and inspirational, and emphasise human dignity, which fills a unique niche. But, the Framework and Principles are not easily operationalised, and do not help explain "how change happens" in terms of how corporates change into more purposeful business over time; and Blueprint's role in this change.
2. With a primary focus on top leaders of large UK-based multinationals, Blueprint is able to punch above its weight and evangelise CEOs who then go on to inspire their boards, senior teams, and peers. Blueprint's value-add is not in bringing up the corporate laggards, but is rather in supporting and growing this coalition of the willing - an approach that complements other efforts in the ecosystem, such as those focusing on compliance/command and control.
3. Blueprint has an effective "carrot and stick" approach, serving as a mentor but also as an accountability agent.
4. The charity status proved to be an appropriate model for Blueprint to establish a non-commercial relationship with corporates, which noted in interviews that they feel more ethically accountable to Blueprint than they would to a consultant. Corporates mentioned that they are more willing to share struggles and company secrets, without the fear of being judge or exposed. This in turn leads to more in-depth discussions on challenges and solutions, helping to mitigate temptations to "purpose-wash".
5. Blueprint has built a wide network, but as the Purpose movement is rapidly expanding, there is an opportunity to be more strategic in its network-building to help figure out future priorities and for spotting "best fit" opportunities and partners.
6. Blueprint is actively trying to learn and adapt, and find innovative ways to effectively engage with corporate leadership, including asking for corporate donations that are given without any strings attached, and are not linked to, or in return for any particular activity.
7. There is growing evidence of Blueprint contributing to corporate mindset change. Corporates have also attributed to Blueprint some of the changes they have made to their strategy and operations.
8. Blueprint's team has been efficient and effective, but there seems to be an over reliance on its CEO.
9. Blueprint has been considering how to best scale its work. It is mindful of the need to focus on avoiding purpose-washing, deepening the conversation around human dignity, and finding ways to solidify systems change.

Recommendations

- Continue focusing on the human dignity dimension; convening top leaders; and applying the "carrot and stick" approach.
- Continue with the current strategy to diversify its pool of donors, not charging corporates in return for a particular service.
- Promote a systems-level workshop: to help map the evolving Purpose movement; explain "how change happens"; and to better identify Blueprint's niche and scaling path that emphasises thoughtfulness over numbers.

Executive summary: key quotes

1. Strategy and theory of change	<p>“Blueprint is good about treating humanity in organisations with dignity, that conversation tends to be lost by others.”</p> <p>“. . . if Blueprint wants to move beyond 1 by 1 organisation change, Blueprint needs a philosophy about how change happens. Blueprint’s current theory is lacking a level of depth.”</p>
2. Top-down and positive approach	<p>“To reach the internal change makers, you cannot avoid CEO and Board because change has to be mandated, and that comes from the top.”</p>
3. “Carrot and stick” approach	<p>“They understand the issues and provide direction. They are a sounding board, like having a mentor, to think through solutions. But they also hold a mirror to us to keep us honest through the process and ask the tough questions.”</p>
4. Charity status	<p>“Like greenwashing, I fear that ‘purpose washing’ is starting to materialise . . . That is why you need a non-commercial organisation . . . pure in its thinking.”</p>
5. Networks	<p>“If Blueprint is going to be systematic about their work, they need to invest more time and research into key stakeholders. I am amazed at how many are doing this work, and it’s difficult to keep up-to-date with different trends, words, and movements.”</p>
6. Learning and adapting	<p>“Now Blueprint is more willing to accept corporate donations - but not in relation to services. Blueprint has gotten more comfortable that people, including corporates, should be able to contribute to improving society.”</p>
7. Main achievements	<p>“[Our] understanding of purpose was too simple. The sense of human dignity is something we never thought about. That philosophical challenge about humanity, spiritual thinking, changed [our] thinking. . . . We realized how smug we were about our systems. In many cases, we were pretending to do things. So the tools, the methodology of questioning [from Blueprint], is very valuable.” - Corporate</p> <p>“My company was run by leaders only motivated to better their own financial circumstances. . . . There was lack of investment in training people. We began a transformation [during the social contract engagements]. We paid suppliers promptly, signed up to the Good Business Charter, paying not less than the living wage. I genuinely don’t think we would be here without [Blueprint].” - Corporate in a social contract</p>
8. Team effectiveness	<p>“There is something brilliant and unique about Blueprint’s framework, but Charles adds something unique”.</p>
9. Spreading	<p>“[Blueprint] keeps thoughtfulness of debate and strength to stand up against [the movement’s] rush for scale – against action before thought.”</p>

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1. Introduction to this evaluation

- Blueprint has commissioned Sustainability Advisory (SA) to conduct an External Learning Evaluation.
- The goal was to help determine and articulate the impact Blueprint has made in changing corporate mindsets and behaviours to catalyse business as a force for good.
- The Evaluation started in October 2020 and was concluded in June 2021.
- This PPT deck serves as the final report for this evaluation. We (the evaluation team) begin by describing the evaluation methods; provide a brief background of Blueprint; present the 9 main evaluation findings; and finalise the report with a set of recommendations.



Sustainability Advisory (SA) is a boutique consulting company based in Helsinki, Finland.

We provide **tailor-made services** including:

- Independent evaluations and due diligence
- Learning exercises
- Fit-for-purpose monitoring systems
- Strategic studies

Our clients include philanthropies, charities, companies, investors, NGOs, governments, and international organisations.

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2. Evaluation methods

- The evaluation was divided into three phases: Inception - Implementation - Reporting.
- At the Inception Phase, we engaged with Blueprint and a donor to help shape the **guiding evaluation questions** (next slide) and identify the main stakeholders to be interviewed. Stakeholders were selected using purposive and snowball sampling approaches, which continued throughout the implementation phase.
- Interviewees included **corporates, staff, trustees, advisory council members, donors, investors, academia, peers and coaches/consultants**. A total of **28 interviews** were carried out between December 2020 and April 2021. The list of interviewees can be found in the Annex to this report.
- All interviews were carried out online, using mostly Zoom.us platform. The interviews were guided by the evaluation questions (divided in approach, deployment, and results) and were conducted using a semi-structured approach. This helped give focus to the interviews, but also allowed the interviewer to customize questions to individual stakeholders' realities. The open-ended approach was based on the understanding that stakeholders' preferences are mainly socially constructed, based on different interests and experiences and shaped by social interaction (Rubin & Rubin 2011).
- At the start of each interview, interviewees were informed that their responses would be kept anonymous.
- Both Atlas Ti (qualitative data analysis and research software) and open coding procedures (Strauss & Corbin 1990) were used to analyse the interview responses and to identify themes and apply codes. A final list of 18 codes was developed. A sample of coded interviews were checked by another team member to ensure suitability of the codes and coding process before all remaining interviews were coded.
- Several relevant documents were reviewed, including Blueprint's theory of change (several versions), annual impact reports (2019, 2020) / NatWest CEO letter of endorsement (2021) / Purpose for PLCs guide 2020 / social contract feedback summaries (Aug 2019, Jan 2020) / Progress Updates to Trustees (Oct & Dec 2020), among others.
- A summary report was presented to the Trustees on 20th April 2021. This final evaluation report was finalised on June 2021.

2. Evaluation questions

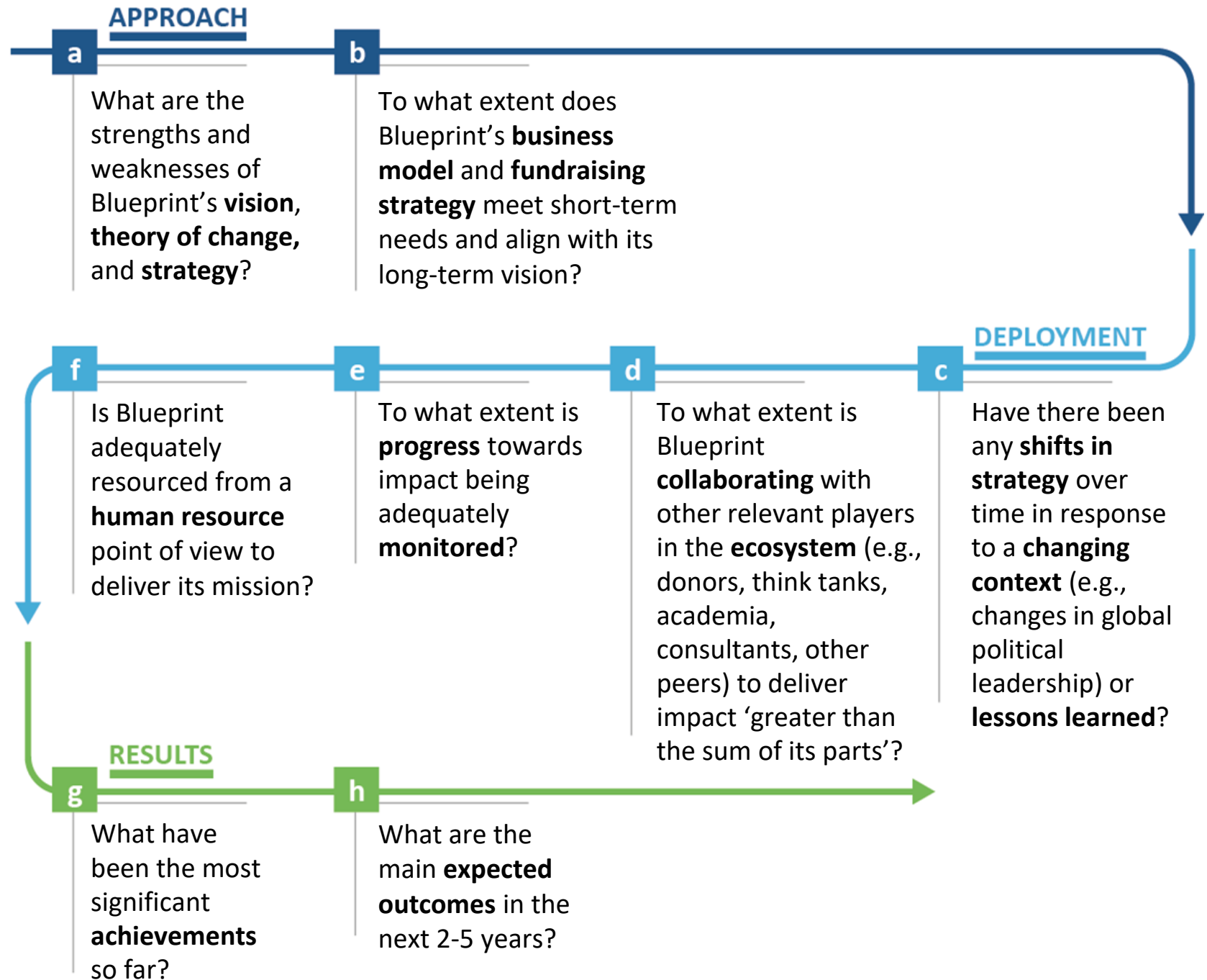


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3. Blueprint's background



- Blueprint is a UK-based independent charity that was formally established in 2014. Blueprint currently has 4.5 staff members, a board of 8 Trustees, and a 12 member Advisory Council.
- Blueprint's purpose is to create a better society through better business. The charity's primary activities involve stimulating and energising a different way of thinking and behaving in business. Blueprint does this through working with senior people in business and those who influence them. This work includes 1:1 interactions with CEOs and other senior people in large corporates, using convening to stimulate and provoke new ways of thinking and exchange learning, as well as longer 1:1 engagements with a small number of corporates to challenge and support them in becoming purpose-led.

The assumptions and beliefs of people in business will shape its business strategy, internal culture, and institutional approach to serve society, and also affect employees' work motivations. Blueprint aims to reshape these foundational principles, and in doing so, supports a broader movement to transform business as a force for good. Blueprint's mission fosters the enabling conditions for other reforms to take place, such as changes to a company's operational processes (e.g., environmental and social impact target setting), which cannot be introduced, much less sustained, without CEO and Board commitment, as well as approval from the employees who will be implementing these initiatives.

Blueprint's twin focus is on the essence of purpose, which goes beyond external environmental and social impact, and also on respect for human dignity. Together these provide an integral basis for building a corporate accountability system that safeguards environmental and social welfare.

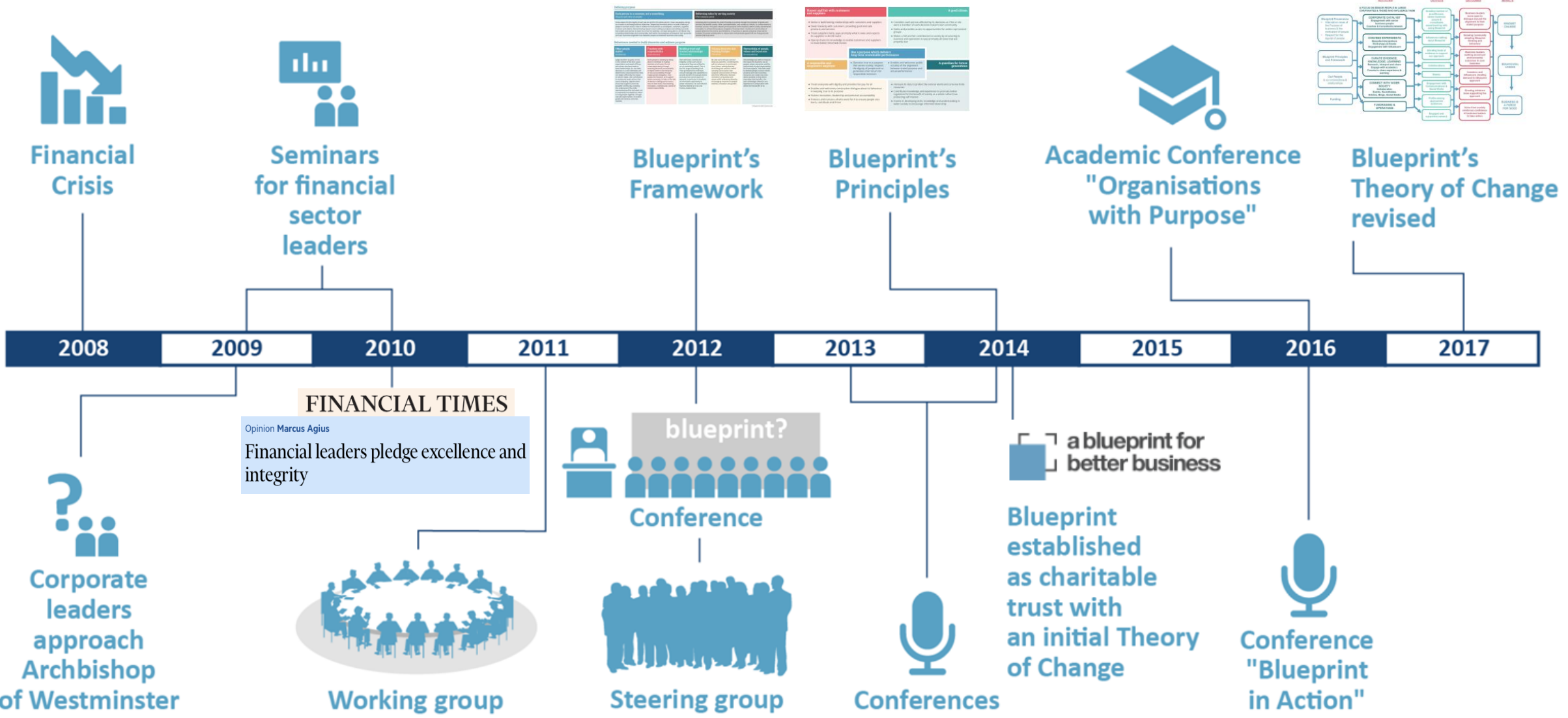
***Quick facts:**

- Blueprint has engaged with 38 large corporates
- 6 companies are currently in social contracts
- Blueprint has met with over 160 CEOs/Chairs

* As of May 2021

3. Blueprint's background: Timeline

BLUEPRINT'S JOURNEY STARTED IN 2008 FOLLOWING THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS. MAIN MILESTONES 2008-2017:



Source: developed by Sustainability Advisory with inputs from Blueprint



Financial crisis

The **global financial crisis** triggered the “Great Recession” that devastated livelihoods and resulted in widespread **criticism of existing business models**. Many considered the model to be self-serving to companies that were purely devoted to profit, while causing negative environmental impacts and worsening inequalities.



Corporate leaders
approach
Westminster
Archbishop

In 2009, concerned by the loss of public trust, a group of **corporate leaders** approached the (then) Archbishop of Westminster, Vincent Nichols, to seek advice on how to **reform the corporate system**. At that time, **Charles Wookey** (the current CEO of Blueprint) was serving the Archbishop as Assistant General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales. Recognising the need for business to adopt a different set of values, the Archbishop and Charles seized the moment to help **address this societal issue**.



Seminars for
financial sector
leaders

In 2009, they organised a series of **private seminars** for **financial sector leaders** to debate **corporate responsibility**, drawing on insights from the Catholic Social Teaching and the Pope’s encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* (Charity in Truth), published that same year. One of the main outcomes was the development of a **pledge**, which was **signed by 17 financiers**, including the Chairman of Barclays, JP Morgan UK, and the London Stock Exchange, and featured in the *Financial Times*. According to Blueprint, this was a promising start in mobilising businesses, but not yet enough to activate **systemic change**.

FINANCIAL TIMES

Opinion Marcus Agius

Financial leaders pledge excellence and integrity

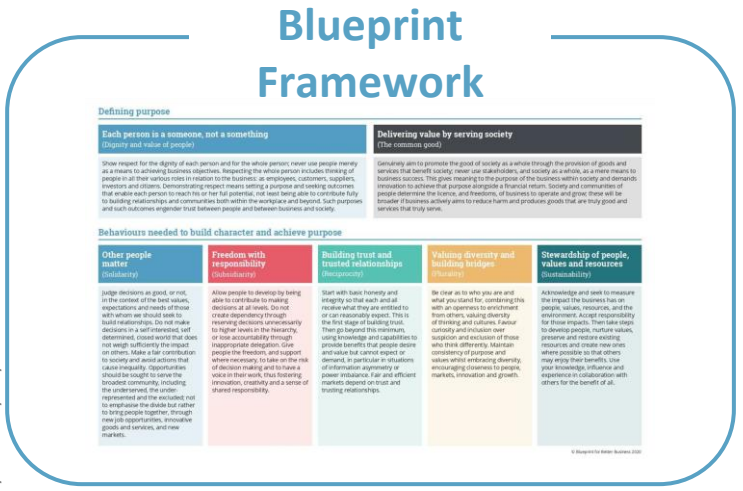
Example of signatories


J.P.Morgan



Following the signing of the pledge, in 2011 Archbishop Vincent Nichols tasked a **working group** to further investigate **how to shift business mindsets**. **Charles** brought together a group of diverse minds, including business practitioners such as **Andrea Ponti** (Vice Chair at **JP Morgan**), and **Loughlin Hickey** (former Global Head of Tax at **KPMG**). Collectively, they examined how the enduring ethics of faith, philosophy, social and behavioural sciences could move **from theory to practice** and **bridge the broken trust between business and society**.

The resulting idea was to **create an initiative called “A Blueprint for Better Business”** that would work to **catalyse a movement** among **top business executives** to embrace **organisational purpose**, which was not a mainstream concept at the time.



To guide the initiative’s work, a draft **Framework** was developed, outlining “how purpose should be defined and the behaviours needed to build character and achieve purpose”. - Blueprint (see next slide).

The Framework was developed to expand ideas on purpose and spur introspective thinking for the user (e.g., corporate), who might otherwise be tempted to rush into the practical applications of Blueprint’s advice without enough time to truly deliberate the core values, as laid out in the Framework.

“The Framework provides a link to the underlying provenance of Blueprint and is drawn from strong foundations of learning from society, including philosophy, faith teachings, social and behavioural science”. - Blueprint.

A framework to guide decision making

Defining purpose

Each person is a someone, not a something (Dignity and value of people)

Show respect for the dignity of each person and for the whole person; never use people merely as a means to achieving business objectives. Respecting the whole person includes thinking of people in all their various roles in relation to the business: as employees, customers, suppliers, investors and citizens. Demonstrating respect means setting a purpose and seeking outcomes that enable each person to reach his or her full potential, not least being able to contribute fully to building relationships and communities both within the workplace and beyond. Such purposes and such outcomes engender trust between people and between business and society.

Delivering value by serving society (The common good)

Genuinely aim to promote the good of society as a whole through the provision of goods and services that benefit society; never use stakeholders, and society as a whole, as a mere means to business success. This gives meaning to the purpose of the business within society and demands innovation to achieve that purpose alongside a financial return. Society and communities of people determine the licence, and freedoms, of business to operate and grow; these will be broader if business actively aims to reduce harm and produces goods that are truly good and services that truly serve.

Behaviours needed to build character and achieve purpose

Other people matter (Solidarity)

Judge decisions as good, or not, in the context of the best values, expectations and needs of those with whom we should seek to build relationships. Do not make decisions in a self interested, self determined, closed world that does not weigh sufficiently the impact on others. Make a fair contribution to society and avoid actions that cause inequality. Opportunities should be sought to serve the broadest community, including the underserved, the under-represented and the excluded; not to emphasise the divide but rather to bring people together, through new job opportunities, innovative goods and services, and new markets.

Freedom with responsibility (Subsidiarity)

Allow people to develop by being able to contribute to making decisions at all levels. Do not create dependency through reserving decisions unnecessarily to higher levels in the hierarchy, or lose accountability through inappropriate delegation. Give people the freedom, and support where necessary, to take on the risk of decision making and to have a voice in their work, thus fostering innovation, creativity and a sense of shared responsibility.

Building trust and trusted relationships (Reciprocity)

Start with basic honesty and integrity so that each and all receive what they are entitled to or can reasonably expect. This is the first stage of building trust. Then go beyond this minimum, using knowledge and capabilities to provide benefits that people desire and value but cannot expect or demand, in particular in situations of information asymmetry or power imbalance. Fair and efficient markets depend on trust and trusting relationships.

Valuing diversity and building bridges (Plurality)

Be clear as to who you are and what you stand for, combining this with an openness to enrichment from others, valuing diversity of thinking and cultures. Favour curiosity and inclusion over suspicion and exclusion of those who think differently. Maintain consistency of purpose and values whilst embracing diversity, encouraging closeness to people, markets, innovation and growth.

Stewardship of people, values and resources (Sustainability)

Acknowledge and seek to measure the impact the business has on people, values, resources, and the environment. Accept responsibility for those impacts. Then take steps to develop people, nurture values, preserve and restore existing resources and create new ones where possible so that others may enjoy their benefits. Use your knowledge, influence and experience in collaboration with others for the benefit of all.



The Blueprint initiative was **publicly launched** at a conference in **2012**, with faith leaders and **CEOs of McKinsey, Vodafone, and Unilever** addressing over **200 executives** from some of the **biggest FTSE 100 companies**, including BAE Systems, Centrica and Tesco.



Some of the key conference participants



The intent was to interact with a **diverse set of stakeholders** to test ideas and assumptions coming out of the **working group**, in search of **pathways for companies to embrace the Framework's vision**.

The event helped build momentum at a time when there was an absence of discussions around organisational purpose (especially at the highest level, as was represented at the conference).

Building on the conference's results, Paul Polman, the **CEO of Unilever**, offered to convene a **steering group** to help Blueprint develop its work. **Workstreams** commenced with input from a range of businesses, NGOs, investors, academics, and wider society to **further structure the thinking** and approach of the Blueprint initiative.



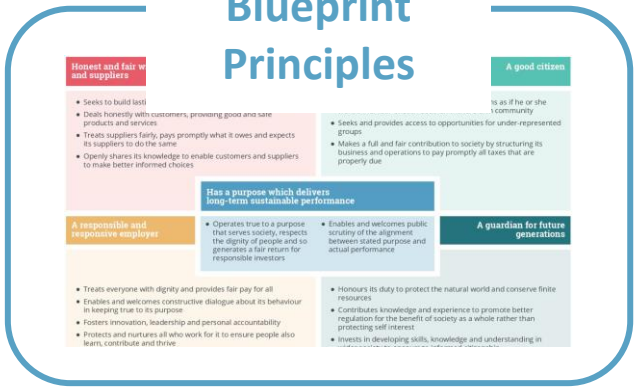
Conferences

In October **2013**, the conference “**Business Success Through Serving Society**” put greater attention to the financial system and its incentives to service society. The event was addressed by senior executives of **BlackRock, Quilter** (formerly Old Mutual Wealth), **Hermes Fund Managers**, among others, calling on the boards and management of **large companies to lead the way**, and in doing so, test Blueprint’s Principles and Framework in a real-world setting. Drawing on **lessons learned**, a third conference was organised in **2014** called “**Putting Purpose into Practice**”, addressed by CEOs like Unilever’s Paul Polman, to broaden awareness of Blueprint’s work and mission among target stakeholders.

Some of the key event participants



Blueprint Principles



In 2014 “**Blueprint for Better Business**” was formally established as a **charitable trust**; the **Framework To Guide Decision Making** was fine-tuned and finalised; and a set of **Five Principles of a Purpose-Driven Business** was conceived.

The **Five Principles** offer a picture of what a purpose-led organisation might look like. Blueprint summarises: “*A business is essentially a set of relationships and we often therefore refer to the Principles as a relationship map. Each section sets out where an organisation seeks to get to rather than where it is. The points are not intended to be exhaustive but are designed to help businesses challenge themselves to be better*”. - Blueprint.

Five principles of a purpose driven business

Honest and fair with customers and suppliers

- Seeks to build lasting relationships with customers and suppliers
- Deals honestly with customers, providing good and safe products and services
- Treats suppliers fairly, pays promptly what it owes and expects its suppliers to do the same
- Openly shares its knowledge to enable customers and suppliers to make better informed choices

A good citizen

- Considers each person affected by its decisions as if he or she were a member of each decision-maker's own community
- Seeks and provides access to opportunities for under-represented groups
- Makes a full and fair contribution to society by structuring its business and operations to pay promptly all taxes that are properly due

Has a purpose which delivers long-term sustainable performance

- Operates true to a purpose that serves society, respects the dignity of people and so generates a fair return for responsible investors
- Enables and welcomes public scrutiny of the alignment between stated purpose and actual performance

A responsible and responsive employer

- Treats everyone with dignity and provides fair pay for all
- Enables and welcomes constructive dialogue about its behaviour in keeping true to its purpose
- Fosters innovation, leadership and personal accountability
- Protects and nurtures all who work for it to ensure people also learn, contribute and thrive

A guardian for future generations

- Honours its duty to protect the natural world and conserve finite resources
- Contributes knowledge and experience to promote better regulation for the benefit of society as a whole rather than protecting self interest
- Invests in developing skills, knowledge and understanding in wider society to encourage informed citizenship



Collaboration

Over the years, Blueprint continued **engaging** and **collaborating** with relevant actors, including **large corporates, investors, NGO’s, and faith groups**, and deepening relations with **hard-to-access top executives** of large UK-based companies and those who influence them. Among other things, Blueprint convened conferences to build its network, generate dialogue, and encourage shared learning. In 2016, it organized two major events: “Blueprint in Action” and “Organisations with Purpose”.



Conference
“Blueprint in
Action”

For example, the **academic conference** “Organisations with Purpose” was co-hosted with the London Business School, chaired by Prof. Rebecca Henderson, and supported by professors from a range of institutions including the Saïd Business School, Harvard Business School, and Pontifical University of St Thomas. The event attracted over 75 research submissions and the scholarly debates provided proof of concept that dominant business models are being challenged, and that there is an opportunity to further collaborate with external experts and develop a robust evidence base.

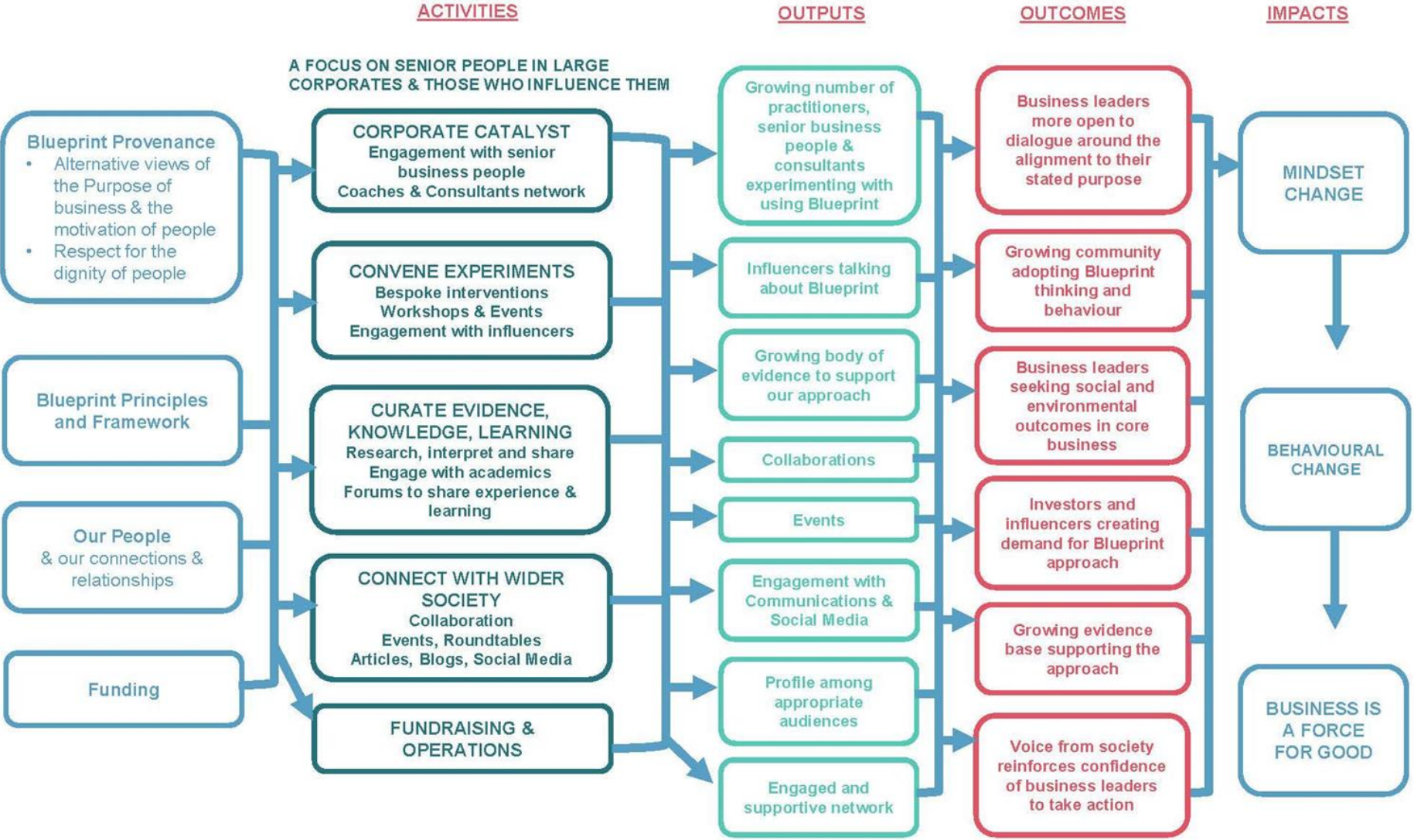
example



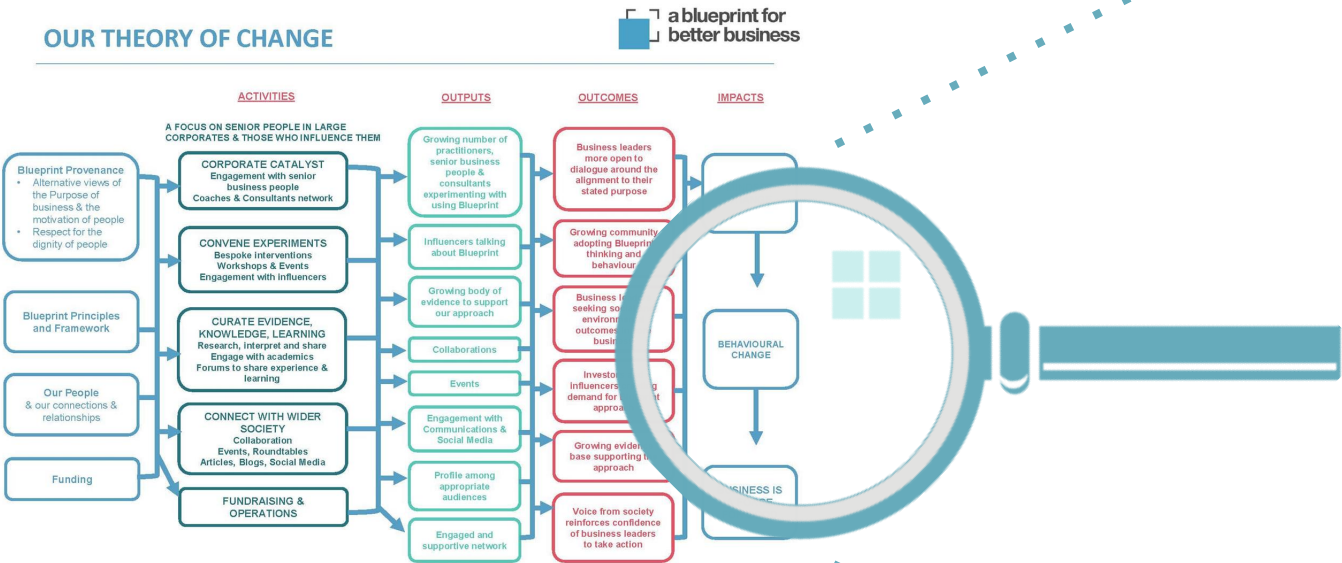
Academic
Conference
“Organisations
With Purpose”

Building on lessons learned, Blueprint was able to **review and document its theory of change** in a diagrammatic format (see next slide), guided by the charity’s ultimate **mission** to “**stimulate and energise a different way of thinking and behaving in business**”.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE



BLUEPRINT AIMS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FOLLOWING IMPACTS:



MINDSET CHANGE

a growing number of business leaders believe that profit is not the purpose of business but the outcome of a well-run business living out a purpose that serves society.

BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

they put people rather than just profit at the centre of their decision making. They act beyond self interest, demonstrate respect for others and build relationships that serve business and society.

End goal: **Business as a force for good**
- businesses act to deliver clear benefits to society as well as delivering long term sustainable performance.

3. Blueprint's background: Approach and methods

BLUEPRINT SUMMARISES ITS WORK AND METHODS:

Our work



Blueprint helps businesses be inspired and guided by a purpose that serves society. Our work is about stimulating and energising a different way of thinking and behaving in business.

Alongside our work with business, we seek to influence the overall conversation about the purpose of business, through dialogue with key influencers such as investors, academics, policy makers, NGOs, consultants to business and others and through our social media, forums, conferences, events and collaboration with other organisations with similar objectives

Our method

- Our tone is positive in seeking to release unrealised potential in people and organisations. We believe business can be a force for good in society and that it is in their mutual interests to do so. It is, therefore, a positive move towards opportunity and fulfilment rather than an obligation that is satisfied by a compliance mentality.
- We work 1:1 with a small group of companies in a way we describe as a social contract to encourage them to experiment with our approach, with us acting as a coach or critical friend – enabling us to learn and share what we learn with others.
- We are working to create a group of committed CEOs who are prepared to personally and publically commit to living out a purpose that serves society through their core business activities.
- We are seeking to build confidence in a group of practitioners within corporates to help them share learning with each other and form a support network.
- We work to help change the conversation about the purpose of business through dialogue with key influencers such as investors, academics, policy makers, NGOs and others, as well as through our social media, forums, conferences, events.
- By sharing our thinking and building a network of coaches & consultants we hope to help them to reach a wider number of companies through their work that we are unable to reach (including SMEs).
- Through our knowledgebase we are seeking to enable more people to access our thinking and approach.
- We curate & share evidence, research and learning to support our thinking and approach.
- We seek to collaborate with others who have similar or complementary objectives, recognising that the broader mindset change we are seeking to promote needs groups to work together, and is far more likely to succeed if there are shared high-level goals and a broad collaborative mentality.

3. Blueprint's background: Priority areas

BLUEPRINT WORKS AROUND 3 MAIN PRIORITY AREAS:



Corporate Engagement

Working in-depth directly with senior leaders in a selected group of major corporates

- Showcase what it means to be purpose-led to encourage other companies to follow suit.
- To create a group of committed CEOs who are prepared to personally and publicly commit to living out a purpose that serves society and provide inspiration to others.



Knowledge sharing

Catalysing change in businesses more broadly

- To create an effective way to share what we are learning more widely.



Targeting influencers

Amplifying Blueprint's work by influencing those who influence senior business leaders

- To contribute to a wider, system shift by influencing investors, coaches & consultants, so that through them our approach can reach a wider number of companies (including SMEs), academics and business schools to help influence the curricula of business schools.



Corporate Engagement

Working in-depth directly with senior leaders in a selected group of major corporates.

Blueprint engages with corporates through:



Social contracts

- A non-legal, non-financial relationship with companies over a period of 18-24 months.
- Blueprint began testing this new arrangement in 2018. This format emerged out of a need for deeper, sustained contact with senior people in a company - to hold them accountable to their commitments, embed new habits of thinking, and support their journey to being purpose-led.
- It comprises 1:1 meetings with CEOs and other senior staff members, running workshops for leadership teams, “town hall” meetings and workshops for large and small teams, and other interventions designed to help provoke different ways of thinking.
- **6 companies (as of May 2021) have entered into social contracts with Blueprint**, including a major bank, a global outsourcing company and a major law firm.
- 1-2 are active in the pipeline.



CEO meetings

- There are 2 types:
 - CEO breakfasts for **groups of 4-5 CEOs** that happen **3-4 times a year**.
 - CEO and Chair forums, drawn from the companies that Blueprint works with, but are less frequent.
- These gatherings are meant for sharing experiences, exchanging lessons, and offering a form of mutual accountability.
- 25 events have been held so far (as of May 2021).
- **161 CEOs / Chairs** have attended.



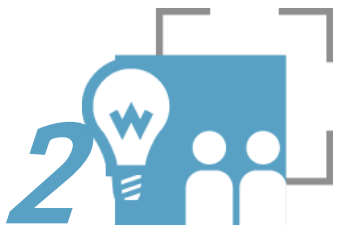
Corporate Engagement

Working in-depth directly with senior leaders in a selected group of major corporates.
Blueprint engages with corporates through:



High-level programmes

- Blueprint conducts broader outreach beyond CEOs to influence executive-level leaders. These high-level programmes facilitate group sessions with management teams to enable peer support and learning:
 - **HR programme** helps HR directors think critically about the role of HR in driving internal change. Leena Nair, HR Director at Unilever, hosted the inaugural forum in 2019, attended by **9 HR directors from large corporates collectively employing 1.4 million people**. A second meeting was hosted by the HR Director of Standard Chartered; and a third event with the theme of social mobility was postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis.
 - **Chairs programme** aims to inspire Boards to be purpose-led in relation to all stakeholders. Mike Rake, chair of Advisory Council (at the time) and former Chairman of KPMG, kicked off this programme in 2019, which was attended by Chairs or non executive directors from **10 large companies**. To support this work, the [Board paper](#) was produced in July 2020.
 - **Guardian for Future Generations** was designed to help business bring together and elevate their work on sustainability into their core strategy and purpose, rather than being something they do on the side. The purpose of the groups is to provide peer support and share learnings. It started in 2020, and so far, 2 small groups made up of 3-5 heads of sustainability have been drawn from the social contract corporates and some others. Since inception, the 2 groups have met a combined total of 7 times.



Knowledge sharing

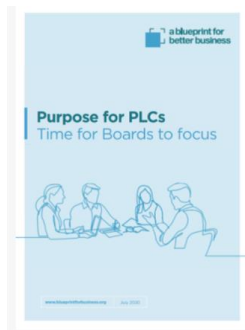
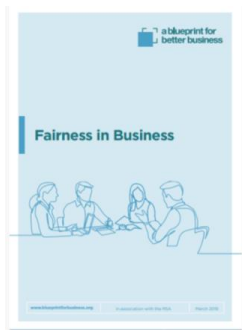
Catalysing change in business more broadly

Blueprint produces a variety of original knowledge content, using feedback and lessons from its public events and corporate engagements. **Blueprint's reports** range in topic from shareholder advocacy to policy implications and the linkage between corporate purpose and public health.

Blueprint also taps into broader communication networks through **social media** (LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube) to publicise Blueprint's thinking and events, amplify the good work of others, and stimulate public debate on why purpose matters.

Blueprint is creating an **online knowledgebase** to help practitioners in business, as well as coaches, consultants and advisers to business, to integrate Blueprint's thinking into its work, and to reach a much broader audience. It is expected to go live at the end of 2021.

Blueprint also gathers knowledge and raises its profile through **news media** outlets. In 2019, Blueprint convened news members, including from the *Guardian* and the *Wall Street Journal*, to learn about journalism's role in corporate accountability and to share Blueprint's mission, which led to follow-on media coverage, such as the following article ([link](#)) published in the *Evening Standard*.



A Blueprint for Better Business

1,518 followers
5d • 1

Thanks to [On Purpose London](#) and [Jonathan Cornejo Jara](#) for organising this event - this is a vital conversation which will drive change and we look forward to joining tomorrow. <https://lnkd.in/d-tCvXi>



Chikere Igboke (She/her) • 3rd+

DEI, Belonging, Anti Racism Consultant & Trainer. Founder of Allyship Community ...
1w • 1

I recently worked with the team at [On Purpose London](#). [Beth Anderson](#) - the Programme Delivery Manager who is a great Active Ally has alerted me to this great opportunity to attend an event hosted by [On Purpose London](#). ...see more



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BUSINESS

Anthony Hilton: Business should benefit society and not just make profits

VIEW COMMENTS



By Anthony Hilton | 10 September 2019

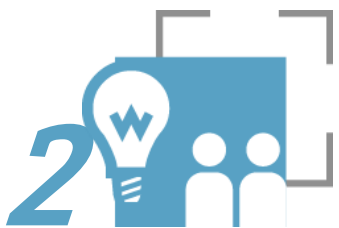
Charles Woolley is the CEO of A Blueprint for Better Business, a charity which holds that business has lost its moral compass. If there is any hope of creating a sustainable society, it needs to return to a core sense of purpose for all.

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Trending

1

Dominic Cummings threatens to release crucial Covid document



Knowledge sharing



Blueprint 4 Business @Blueprint4Biz · May 4

We are sometimes asked what implications a commitment to becoming [#purpose](#)-led has for how businesses should think about [#culture](#) and [#conduct](#). This working paper explores Blueprint's thinking and experience and we would welcome feedback and comments.



Culture and conduct in a purpose-led business | A Blueprint for Better ...
We are sometimes asked what implications a commitment to becoming purpose-led has for how businesses should think about culture and ...
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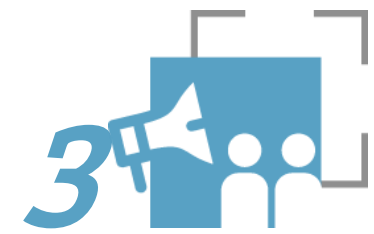
Blueprint 4 Business @Blueprint4Biz · May 7

"I often hear that "people need to find their voice at work". But we all already have a voice — the truth is just that many of us haven't felt empowered enough to use it." Excellent article from [@lizuvie](#) in the [@FT](#)



Workers can use their voice if they come together
Whether within informal groups or unions, employees can collectively advocate for the future they want
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Targeting Influencers

Amplifying our work by influencing those who influence senior business leaders



Catalyse change

- To catalyse systems change, Blueprint also works with its network of **coaches and consultants, academics, investors, and NGOs** through various channels:
 - Blueprint holds meetings twice a year for **coaches and consultants** interested in the Blueprint approach, generating a mutually beneficial exchange of experiences and learning. This **network** is growing and includes **212 members** as of 2021. Blueprint has also partnered with consultants on joint projects to build greater understanding of the implementation aspects of purpose.



Investors dialogue

- Blueprint also seeks **dialogue** with **investors** to influence shareholder stewardship of the companies they own. In 2018, Blueprint convened senior investors with combined **assets under management of over \$8 trillion** to list key questions that investors should ask to probe how far company management is pursuing purpose. Building off of this engagement, Blueprint has been collaborating with the Purposeful Company Taskforce, which is a consortium of FTSE companies, investment houses, business schools, consultancy firms and policy makers, working on e.g., improving policies. Blueprint also works with Andy Haldane, Chief Economist of the Bank of England, to co-host **meetings with asset managers and asset owners, to push for capital allocations that align with Blueprint's Principles on purpose.**

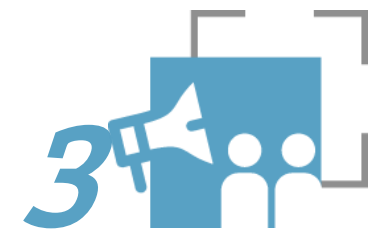
Example of collaborative partners



**BIG
INNOVATION
CENTRE**



BANK OF ENGLAND



Targeting Influencers

Amplifying our work by influencing those who influence senior business leaders



Academic conference

- In the **academic and research realm**, Blueprint has been actively involved to **teach, study, and communicate** on the topic of purpose. Some examples include:
 - Since its 2016 academic conference, Blueprint has maintained relationships with key academics, both to keep abreast of new research and to consider ways in which Blueprint's work can contribute to research that strengthens the business case for purpose.
 - Since 2015, Blueprint has been leading an annual class at Said Business school for Prof Colin Mayer's elective course on the purpose of the corporation.
 - Blueprint worked with Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and the Universities of Cambridge and Portsmouth for a research project on organisational purpose.
 - Blueprint's Trustees also contribute to engagements. One example was a partnership with academics to publish a cover article for the journal Strategic Finance. In 2020, a Trustee also wrote the essay "The purpose of purpose: a new business frame of mind," in Financial Conduct Authority on transforming culture in finance.



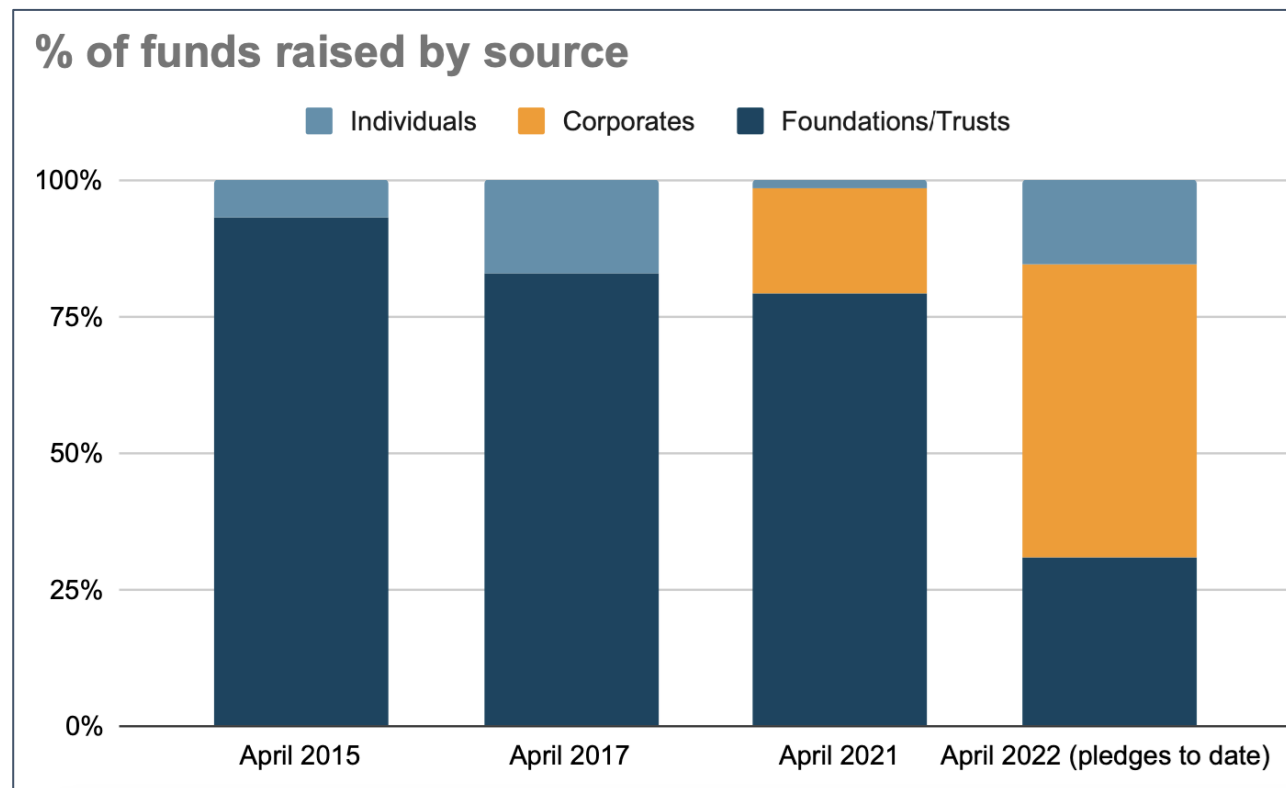
NGO

Other examples of collaborations includes those with **NGOs and the wider society**.

- In 2018, Blueprint collaborated with the Health Foundation and published the report "How Can Purpose-led Businesses Contribute to People's Health?".

3. Blueprint's background: Funding model

- Blueprint relies on donations from Foundations and Trusts, high-net-worth individuals (HNWI)/individuals, and most recently from corporate donations.
- To preserve Blueprint's independence, the charity does not accept any form of payment for services. The corporate donations are given without any strings attached, and are not linked to, or in return for any particular activity.
- The graphs below show the evolution of the funding model. It provides a rough percentage of funding sources in 4 different points in time:



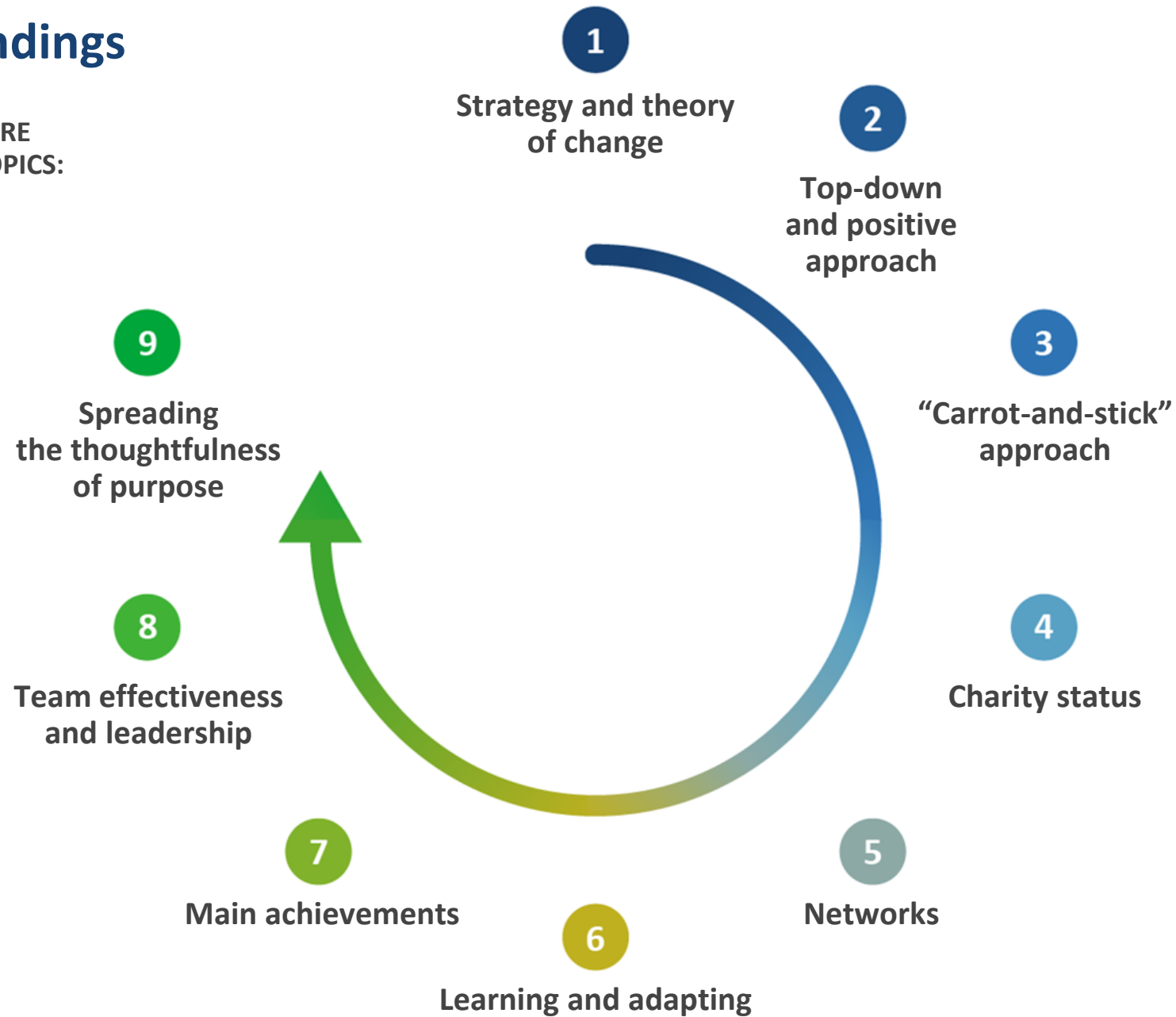
Source: developed by Sustainability Advisory with inputs from Blueprint

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4. Evaluation findings

THE MAIN FINDINGS ARE
ORGANISED INTO 9 TOPICS:



Strategy and theory of change

The strategy and theory of change inform a distinct and potentially transformational approach to making businesses more purposeful

Blueprint's journey started in 2008. The strategy and theory of change were slowly developed based on insights from several conferences, workshops, and bilateral discussions with a diverse set of practitioners, top corporate leaders and academics.

The five **Principles and Framework** are simple but powerful; they are authentic and inspirational, and emphasise **human dignity**, which fills a **unique niche**. Even though Purpose has become more mainstreamed compared to the situation in 2008, the human dignity aspect is often forgotten or not prioritised by other organisations working in this space.

The underlying premise is that business is a series of human relationships, and its purpose is to benefit society and respect the dignity of people. Based on this belief, Blueprint offers an alternative approach to profit-driven business management. They inspire and challenge corporate leaders to rethink assumptions: to see business as part of society, to value every individual person, and recognise that people are motivated by more than just money--they seek a greater sense of meaning and connection to work.

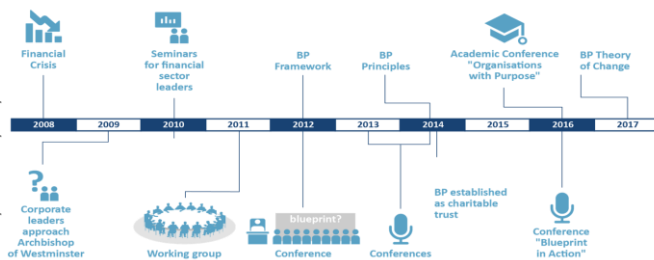
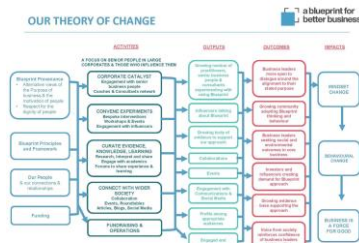
Blueprint found a **distinct and potentially transformational** path to explore and help businesses become more purposeful.

“

Both the framework and principles, I haven't found a better or more thoughtful one.

Blueprint is good about treating humanity in organisation with dignity, that conversation tends to be lost by others.

Blueprint has positioned themselves as a thought leader who - through research and practical application - have been able to distill what being purpose led really means . . .



However, it seems that simplicity is now begging for complexity, with stakeholders asking for more

Even though the Framework, Principles and ToC are powerful in their simplicity, most interviewees thought that they are missing “more details” and the “next step”.

When **corporates** began **applying the Principles**, they **experienced difficulty** deciding what specific actions to take, and realised the Principles were not easily operationalised, requiring more brainstorming and engagement with Blueprint.

Donors and peers felt a degree of **vagueness** in Blueprint’s vision of a “purposeful business” in terms of different sectors and contexts. They also noted that the Principles do not exactly answer **how change happens**, or other strategic questions such as: which companies to target? what are the metrics of success? and how to verify impact? This ambiguity was also echoed in relation to Blueprint’s ToC, which some felt to be lacking a systematic examination of the current ecosystem and putting Blueprint in a reactive position.

One of Blueprint’s challenges is that there is no “one-size-fits-all” pathway forward, with each business having to develop its own plan to address the needs and problems befitting the company’s context. Blueprint is in the process of filling this knowledge gap by working with corporates of different sectors facing different issues, and learning how its Principles and Framework can be applied in practice. But more work is needed.

This feedback presents an opportunity for Blueprint to be more explicit in its strategy by clarifying how corporates change into more purposeful business over time; what is Blueprint’s role in this change; and what types of engagements (with other actors in the ecosystem) will deliver the desired results.

“

I would not have been able to just use their raw material. It requires expert help from Blueprint.
- Corporate

Blueprint didn’t grab us because it felt vague. Nowhere could we tell what the principles mean in practice. It felt like there was a big gap.
- Donor

... if Blueprint wants to move beyond 1 by 1 organisation change, Blueprint needs a philosophy about how change happens. Blueprint’s current theory is lacking a level of depth.

The positive tone and focus on top leaders proved effective and complementary to other efforts in the ecosystem

Blueprint adopts a **positive tone** when engaging with corporates, promoting win-win approaches that benefit both society and businesses. While other organisations in the purpose-ecosystem are focusing on the compliance/command and control mentality, Blueprint has chosen to work on a **positive leverage point** trying to convince corporates that there is opportunity and fulfilment in (voluntarily) becoming more purposeful. These 2 approaches are likely **complementary** and needed, as sustainability will likely be achieved through a mix of instruments and approaches.

Through discussions with several stakeholders over the years, Blueprint has identified that corporate change is likely to happen when the message comes from the top; when initiated by CEOs. Through this top-down approach, Blueprint is helping to determine what kinds of incentives and penalties influence corporate leaders to take the right actions over the longer term.

With a primary focus on **top leaders** of large **UK-based multinationals**, Blueprint is able to punch above its weight and influence CEOs who then go on to inspire their boards, senior team, and peers outside of their own companies.

Blueprint's value-add is not in bringing up the corporate laggards, but in supporting and **growing** this **coalition of the willing**, to help catalyse and promote systems change.

“

The win is the thoughtfulness of CEOs.

To reach the internal change makers, you cannot avoid CEO and Board because change has to be mandated, and that comes from the top.

Try sleeping in a tent with a mosquito, you can't. Blueprint could be the small thing that has an effect on big thing. It is a catalyst, an advocate, evangelist, an information disseminator.

Blueprint has created a group of companies who are themselves evangelising the Blueprint way. It is clever the way they did it.

While most corporates interviewed agreed that working with top leaders is important, other stakeholders do not yet clearly understand what the benefits of this approach are.

Corporates were pleased with Blueprint's approach, which works mostly with top executives and provide them with a safe, yet challenging platform to interact and learn from each other.

Other stakeholders, that are not the primary target audience of Blueprint, are still struggling to understand the benefits of working with top leaders. Doubts were voiced around how systematic Blueprint is and how that approach is contributing to larger systems change, as opposed to changing individual companies.

“

It has been helpful and motivating to be confronted by CEOs of much larger, much more successful companies that are much farther along the journey.

- Corporate

[Working with CEOs is not a differentiator] because there are other organisations speaking at a high level, like CDP . . . Blueprint is not focused enough on changing the systems as opposed to changing individual companies.

We are thinking about fixing broken systems and disrupting and changing models for the public benefit. For us, Blueprint needs a lot more edge and think a lot more systematically.

- Donor

“Carrot and stick” approach

Blueprint has an effective “carrot and stick” approach, serving as a mentor but also as an accountability agent

Blueprint has a unique and effective “**carrot and stick**” approach.

Blueprint serves as a **mentor**, giving senior leaders a safe space to explore what purpose means for their organisation, and to brainstorm with peers how to translate good intentions into practical actions.

When engaging corporates (both through CEO meetings and social contracts), Blueprint presents thought-provoking ideas in a way that “*lets [purpose] emerge and builds consensus and empathy around it*”, instead of forcing the teachings. For example, Blueprint guided discussions around race and COVID-19, spurring CEOs to reflect on each other’s handling of personal prejudice, workplace discrimination, and staff treatment during times of crises.

Yet Blueprint also acts as an **accountability agent**, as an **enforcer** of thoughtfulness, frequently probing leaders to embody deeper values in all that they do. Blueprint challenges companies when it sees that purpose is being managed like a project, as opposed to being nurtured as the heart of decision making. One CEO remarked, “*I come out bruised from the calls because [Blueprint] asks hard questions about purpose*”. And it is through these tough debates that this specific CEO was able to pause the company’s purpose agenda; rethink its siloed, short-term initiatives; and create a more holistic and enduring strategy on purpose.

By both encouraging and scrutinising the “good intentions” of businesses, Blueprint is promoting the growth of purpose-led values and behaviours, backed by actions. These corporates, due to their high profile and global footprint, in turn, have the potential to inspire and nudge their wider networks to also pursue positive steps.

“

They understand the issues and provide direction. They are a sounding board, like having a mentor, to think through solutions. But they also hold a mirror to us to keep us honest through the process and ask the tough questions.

- Corporate

I regard Charles as a trusted advisor. Blueprint requires regular check-ins between CEO and Charles, and that is one of the largest parts of its value add.

I have regular check-ins with Charles, and I look forward to these engagements because I learn or get challenged on something.

Charity status proved to be an appropriate model for Blueprint's trusted, high-level engagements

The charity model proved to be a key differentiator for Blueprint and essential for its effectiveness.

By establishing a **non-commercial relationship** with corporates, Blueprint creates a safe environment that attracts multinationals to the table, and encourages executives to share their challenges without the fear of being judged. Corporate interviewees noted that Blueprint's charity status made them less skeptical and more willing to hear what Blueprint had to offer. Furthermore, corporates noted that they feel more ethically accountable to Blueprint as it does not have profit motive. This enables Blueprint to establish an equal-footing relationship with corporate leaders, which in turn leads to more transparent and robust solutions, helping to mitigate temptations to "purpose-wash".

As a result, Blueprint is able to **access large corporates**, and has succeeded in earning the **trust** and **respect** of **CEOs of major publicly listed companies**, including the NatWest Group, Unilever, Capita, and Severn Trent - a heavyweight group that is difficult to access, or gain sustained attention from.

“

Charity status gives Blueprint the ability to believe that they are on your side. . . . It is a genuinely mutually beneficial relationship.
- Corporate

If you have a commercial client relationship, and that client starts to purpose wash, you aren't going to put at risk your revenue.

Like greenwashing, I fear that "purpose washing" is starting to materialise . . . That is why you need a non-commercial organisation . . . pure in its thinking.

The weight and gravitas of assembling FTSE 100 CEOs is a huge achievement on itself.
- Donor

Charity status

But given the reliance on donations, Blueprint would benefit from continuing to diversify funding sources

The downside of the funding model is the **over-reliance on donations**. Blueprint has been diversifying its sources of funding and have secured corporate donations starting in 2020.

Core funding from foundations and HNWI/individuals will still be important in the near future to help Blueprint continue solidifying its work, attracting the attention and interest of corporates (e.g. to engage in a social contract), communicating successful practices, and paving a path to scale impact. We believe there is still ample opportunity in the donor community, but to tap into more resources would require Blueprint to systematically examine the donor landscape and develop a more **strategic fundraising plan**. This should include a more straight explanation (specially to donors) on how Blueprint's activities are aligned with charitable work. It is not clear to many how working with corporates to help them improve practices is aligned with the public benefit nature of charity.

Corporates under the **social contract** mentioned that they were keen to make donations, but only when they understood the value add Blueprint was bringing to the table. One corporate interviewee even noted that *"we would have given even more than what Charles has asked for"*. It seems that the timing to ask for corporate donations, how to approach corporates with the request, and the dollar-amount are still aspects Blueprint is trying to figure out.

Additionally, Blueprint has **not yet explored the potential to charge a fee for the CEO gatherings**. There might be opportunities there.



Funding sources



Social contracts



CEO meetings

“

[Blueprint] doesn't take money for services. That closes down sources of funding, but Blueprint needs the independence . . .

It was great that Blueprint would not take money from us during the process. I would be cynical if Charles was someone from a big consulting firm.

- Corporate

We were not looking for a low-cost solution. If asked to contribute money now, I would seriously consider it.

- Corporate

Charity needs to prove a public benefit. And increasingly that is what people are looking for, so how is Blueprint's work linked to public benefit and communities, and how are community voices being included.



Catalyse
change



Knowledge
sharing



Target
influencers

Blueprint has built a wide network, but as the “Purpose” movement is rapidly expanding, strategic network-building is key for figuring out future priorities and for spotting “best fit” opportunities and partners

Blueprint has built a large **network** with whom to collaborate, share lessons and influence to help **catalyse change**. Blueprint is increasingly being approached by a variety of organisations seeking to explore partnerships. This is an indication that actors in the ecosystem are starting to talk about Blueprint and that awareness of its work is increasing. However, Blueprint finds itself sometimes overwhelmed with invitations, without a clear idea of who to prioritise.

Blueprint has also invested in being active in social media, participating in and promoting webinars. But interviewees mentioned that Blueprint is not well known outside of specific circles, and Blueprint’s message is not always clear, or fine-tuned to specific target audiences.

An immediate and likely continuing challenge for Blueprint is identifying which **key players** (e.g., investors, coaches, academics, policy makers) are most critical to help Blueprint fulfil its mission. It is also paramount that Blueprint figures out the best way to engage with different audience, which have different priorities and needs. Being more systematic will help Blueprint remain distinct yet complementary to what is happening in the crowded and rapidly evolving “Purpose” ecosystem, and avoid spreading themselves too thin.

“

I think it would be amazing to do a mapping exercise of its ecosystem . . . to think through how its pitch is distinct.

They never come across our radar. We never see a bid that says “we are working with Blueprint,” and we support a lot of organisations that work on partnerships.

- Donor

If Blueprint is going to be systematic about its work, they need to invest more time and research into key stakeholders. I am amazed at how many are doing this work, and it’s difficult to keep up-to-date with different trends, words, and movements.

Blueprint is actively trying to learn and adapt, and find innovative ways to effectively engage with corporate leadership

Some of the key lessons so far include:

- **Change is iterative and cannot be rushed.** Blueprint recognises that it is on a journey and does not have all the answers. Blueprint works to co-create answers with Corporates, rather than impose change.
- **Blueprint is contributing to a movement, not creating one.** When established, Blueprint positioned itself at the forefront of a growing corporate movement, and saw itself as the shepherd of a “Blueprint movement” within which businesses of all sizes can evolve its purpose across any sector. After engaging with several players, Blueprint learned that it was not really building a movement by itself, but rather, working alongside other players in the ecosystem to contribute to a much wider systems transformation.
- Blueprint has also **adjusted its fundraising model** to seek corporate donations in order to reduce reliance on donors and improve its financial sustainability.
- The **social contract was also an adaptation based on learning.** It was developed out of the realisation that change in knowledge does not necessarily (or even generally) lead to a change in attitudes or behaviour. Despite the CEO meetings showing signs of mindset change, Blueprint realised that more was needed to help translate theory into practice, and engage with corporates over a longer period of time if they want to see change solidify, and behavioural change.

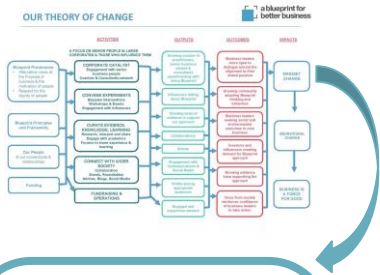
“

... need to be comfortable about not knowing and have the confidence to extend that to our [Blueprint's] clients. Sometimes our role is to say, “let's look at how answers can emerge”.

Now Blueprint is more willing to accept corporate donations - but not in relation to services. Blueprint has gotten more comfortable that people, including corporates, should be able to contribute to improving society

We are still early on our journey, but we have started using the Framework not only in theory but in practice.
- Corporate in a social contract

It is not an easy journey, and if the CEO is not committed to it, it is difficult. I have spent a lot of time and effort on this.
- Corporate In a social contract



MINDSET CHANGE

a growing number of business leaders believe that profit is not the purpose of business but the outcome of a well-run business living out a purpose that serves society

There is growing evidence of Blueprint likely contributing to corporate mindset change

Blueprint's ToC highlights 2 areas where Blueprint aims to make a change: promoting mindset change and behavioural change.

There is evidence that Blueprint's work is starting to **elevate corporate consciousness**, which is an essential step before achieving behavioural change. Some examples include:

- Through interactions with Blueprint, a CEO noted in the interview that he/she gained an alternative way to look at businesses and attribute more value to individuals. When asked about mindset change, the CEO remarked how Blueprint opened the CEO's mind about valuing human relationships throughout the company's operations: *"What struck a chord is the messaging around purpose - if all stakeholders are treated appropriately then shareholders benefit"*.
- Another CEO changed how to think about purpose by taking an introspective look at why it matters. The CEO internalised Blueprint's thinking and realised the most important question to orient action is, *"Why is purpose important to the individual?"*.
- A social contract CEO explained that Blueprint's ability to contextualise change in a non-threatening way allowed the CEO to understand how addressing society's needs would empower the company's people instead of disrupting their work. *"I get excited by the business opportunities [involving purpose], and Blueprint brings it back to the people aspect."* Now the CEO is sensitive to the danger of commoditising purpose, and emphasised how important it is to create that sense of understanding.

“

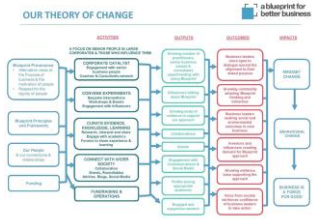
[Our] understanding of purpose was too simple. The sense of human dignity is something we never thought about. That philosophical challenge about humanity, spiritual thinking, changed [our] thinking. . . . We realized how smug we were about our systems. In many cases, we were pretending to do things. So the tools, the methodology of questioning [from Blueprint], is very valuable.

- Corporate

Across our stakeholder groups in 45 countries, people have different views on what purpose means . . . I loved hearing Blueprint say this has to be authentic, practical, and inspirational. I keep coming back to this. It allowed us to liberate many people's thinking about what we could be.

- Corporate in a social contract

Main achievements



MINDSET CHANGE

a growing number of business leaders believe that profit is not the purpose of business but the outcome of a well-run business living out a purpose that serves society

Blueprint's corporate engagement activities and its convening events seems to have start unlocking change

Blueprint has been **convening and facilitating gatherings**, which are giving business leaders a safe space to discuss sensitive topics, inspire and be inspired by peers, and build conviction on why purpose matters to their company.

Blueprint has so far engaged with a total of 161 CEOs and Chairs, and arranging these group dialogues has been empowering executives to be **more thoughtful and compassionate** in their interpretations of corporate responsibility. For example:

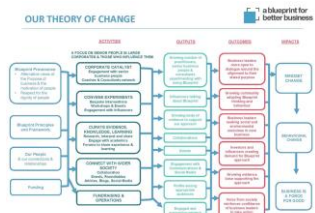
- A CEO noted that a debate promoted by Blueprint around Black Lives Matter was a safe space for everyone to share their struggles and made him/her confront his/her own implicit bias, admitting, *"that concept was unlocked"*, and compelled the CEO to rethink (and act on) how racism is handled by the company.
- A corporate explained how Blueprint's events allowed the CEO to reimagine its purpose strategy, which had gotten stuck internally. The CEO found it helpful *"to step back, think, and have a sounding board through the Blueprint forums"*.

“

The room lights up when Blueprint talks about purpose and how it is about people committing their lives to worthwhile activities. Our CFO - his day job is counting money - said this makes sense . . . and wants to feel like [he/she] contributes to something that will outlast [him/her].
- Corporate in a social contract

The environment of trust gives CEOs confidence speaking externally, like to investors, since they have already tested the messaging with other leaders. At the last meeting, [a CEO] came back saying "CEO of Unilever is working on their net zero agenda, can [we] connect with him to ask more about their approach".
- Corporate

Main achievements



BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

They put people rather than just profit at the centre of their decision making. They act beyond self interest, demonstrate respect for others, and build relationships that serve business and society.

Corporates attribute some changes in their strategy to Blueprint's work

Blueprint's work is likely contributing to corporate behavioural change, and is pushing companies to demonstrate their understanding of purpose through practical, real world actions. The most significant results have emerged from the **social contracts**. Some examples:

- **NatWest**, a leader in its sector, and the winner of the HR Excellence Award 2020 for "best health and wellbeing strategy," has made several statements attributing their change in practice to Blueprint: *"Our purpose, to champion potential, helping people, families and businesses to thrive, was shaped by working closely with Blueprint"*. (Natwest's 2020 ESG Report)
- A **social contract** corporate noted that the recruiting process for the leadership team was changed as result of Blueprint's thinking. The CEO assessed candidates based their *"potential to be purpose-led"*, meaning the person had to be committed to promoting a fairer form of capitalism, and the CEO believes the current executive team was influenced by Blueprint in this way.

“

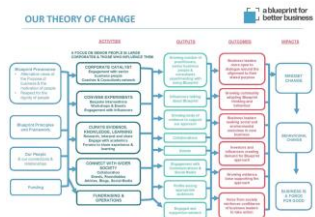
My company was run by leaders only motivated to better their own financial circumstances. . . . There was lack of investment in training people. We began a transformation [during the social contract engagements]. We paid suppliers promptly, signed up to the Good Business Charter, paying not less than the living wage. I genuinely don't think we would be here without [Blueprint].

- Corporate in social contract

Blueprint changed my company's behaviour, utterly and fundamentally. My company was hugely influenced by Blueprint . . . [and] began transformation . . .

- Corporate in a social contract

Main achievements



BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

They put people rather than just profit at the centre of their decision making. They act beyond self interest, demonstrate respect for others, and build relationships that serve business and society.

- A **social contract** CEO changed his/her management approach by revising the company's key performance indicators (KPIs) to value all stakeholders within the business value chain and broader society. Every month, the CEO receives a report on corporate performance using updated KPIs that are based on Blueprint's Framework.
- **Another social contract** noted that, before working with Blueprint, the company was doing purpose but in a fragmented way that didn't speak to personal values. *"Blueprint stopped me and said this is all wrong, and [we] have started all over, and we have been working on it for 3 years."* Through the sustained engagements, Blueprint helped bring coherence to the company's purpose strategy and see the whole ecosystem around it.

“

We said we would continue full pay, and told employees they can work out challenges with managers, and this gave the organisation an enormous boost.

We are still on the journey, but I hope the staff feels they have more of a voice in the direction of the business and that it is more inclusive. We have been working hard on that. We want to create that conversation. I hope they see a correlation between our business direction and purpose. We are launching [our purpose strategy] next month.

- Corporate in a social contract

Study case
Show me the evidence!



NatWest: Purpose-led Strategy

NatWest Groups is a majority state-owned British banking and insurance holding company, with over 799.5 billion GBP in total assets and 59,900 employees (2020).

Building from the interactions with Blueprint through its **social contract**, **NatWest's CEO Alison Rose** was able to **launch a purpose-led strategy** that publicly credits Blueprint as its source of inspiration and guidance. Their strategy directly mirrors Blueprint's Principles, and the CEO attributes actions such as the publication of its Fair Pay Charter and New Supplier Charter for ethical business conduct, as well as its COVID crisis response that prioritises employee well-being, as influences of Blueprint.

NatWest now refers to itself as a "relationship bank", which is the kind of fundamental mindset change Blueprint strives for in elevating the value of human dignity.

The CEO has committed to extending her partnership with Blueprint for another year (2020-21), to further transform NatWest's reputation, which was damaged in the 2008 financial crisis after being bailed out by the UK government.



Our strategy and highlights

Our purpose-led strategy

In 2020, NatWest Group set out to build a purpose-led bank.

Our purpose, to champion potential, helping people, families and businesses to thrive, was shaped by working closely with Blueprint for Better Business, an independent charity which aims to create a better society through better business.

Source: <https://www.natwestgroup.com/>



Capita: Becoming a purpose-led business

Capita is a London-based consulting, transformation and digital services business with over 61,000 employees and operations in the UK, Europe, India and South Africa. In 2020, Capita's annual revenue totaled over 3.3 billion GBP.

Through Capita's **social contract** engagements with Blueprint, the **CEO, Jon Lewis**, has been able to steer the company's multi-year transformation to becoming a purpose-led business. In 2019, Capita announced it would rebrand itself as a "purpose-led" company. By applying Blueprint's thinking and Blueprint's Five Principles:

- In 2019, Capita launched its responsible business strategy, which is based on feedback from stakeholder consultations aligned to the UN SDGs;
- In 2019, Capita became the only FTSE-listed company to have appointed two employees to its board of directors;
- In 2020, Capita committed to pay all UK employees an independently verified "Real Living Wage".
- Capita has reduced its carbon footprint by 5.9% compared to 2018 levels.

"We will continue to work with Blueprint to further integrate our purpose into everything we do." - Jon Lewis, CEO of Capita (2021)

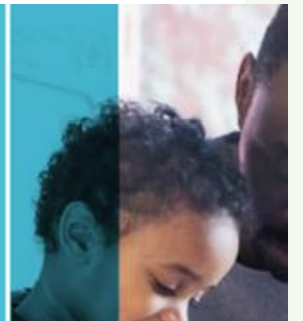


Responsible
Business
Report 2019

Introducing
our strategy

Becoming a purpose-led business

Touching the lives of millions of people every day, we aspire to use our position in society to be a force for good



Operating responsibly for our stakeholders

Suppliers

Clients

People

Investors

Blueprint's team has been efficient and effective, but there seems to be over reliance on its CEO

In our view, **Blueprint's 4,5 people team** has been highly efficient and effective. Together, they have played a notably active role in convening and inspiring senior executives, developing a network, and translating the Principles into practice.

While the team members have complementary skills, Blueprint's success to date is often attributed to its charismatic leader. Interviewees noted some key attributes of the current CEO that are likely contributing to the success of Blueprint to date:

- "Charles' capacity for *intellectual and pragmatic thinking* around what being purpose led means. No chairman or CEO is going to be persuaded if this person does not have that level of *gravitas*. It's not just the thought leadership. The person has to be *subtle in influencing*, has to be a *fantastic convener*, has got to have *network and access*".
- "It is critical to be *able to speak with heads of companies* at their level. Charles worked on this and learned this skill. *Mutual respect* and less mutual understanding of business management. A *strong understanding of how businesses and executive teams work*".

Hiring additional staff, or splitting the CEO's duties into more than 1 person may alleviate the risk of over-dependence on a single (key) staff member.

“

They are thoughtful and organised. [They] reflect on themes, and clearly do their planning - "Here is the agenda and the direction. This is what we will get out of the conversation".

There is something brilliant and unique about Blueprint's framework, but Charles adds something unique.

What worries me about Blueprint would be the overreliance on Charles.

Spreading the thoughtfulness of purpose

Prioritising a path to scale that emphasises thoughtfulness over numbers

After having been around for 6 years (established in 2014), Blueprint (and others) are starting to ask: “where is the scale?”

Despite having found a niche, Blueprint’s value-add to the common good is not as readily apparent or publicly known, partially due to its need to maintain a level of impartiality and confidentiality so senior business leaders can be honest and vulnerable with Blueprint as they jointly tackle what it means to be genuinely purposeful. This process is inherently a long, and often private journey for the company, which makes it a challenge for Blueprint to showcase the fruits of its labour.

Blueprint was recognised by many interviewees as one of the few actors that has in-depth ideas on how to promote Purpose. This is one of its distinct advantages, and helps avoid “purpose-washing”. Moving forward, Blueprint has clear potential to continue having an impact and contributing to change at scale. However, a strategy to scale-up should not be rushed to avoid unsustainable growth. Instead, Blueprint is likely to be better off by building on the the richness of thought it has been building with corporates and other partners, and embedding a strategy to replicate and scale action in systems change thinking.

All in all scaling should not be at the expense of diluting authenticity of purpose.

“

[Blueprint] keeps thoughtfulness of debate and strength to stand up against [the movement’s] rush for scale – against action before thought.

Blueprint should do more social contracts, that might mean more staff to operate at larger scale. I don’t think Blueprint should be solely focused on scale. Having a select group of big companies is a way in which Blueprint can . . . yield practical examples of how purpose can be instilled.

[Blueprint should] continue to promote what it has been doing but also to be the ‘guardian of the gold standard’ - what it really looks to be purpose driven - as a way to critique authenticity of purpose. Should be distinctive yet complementary to what is happening in the ecosystem.

My hope for Blueprint is that they hang around long enough to create a sufficiently vibrant ecosystem of companies that can carry forward the work and make the ecosystem more self-sustaining.

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5. Recommendations

1. Human dimension is the most distinguished feature of Blueprint's work, so we encourage Blueprint to continue focusing on this niche

Purpose as a corporate concept is becoming incredibly popular, but actions around it tend to be siloed or superficial. For Blueprint, a truly purpose-led business is one that both benefits society and respects people. The first shift is gaining momentum with many corporates expanding their definition of success beyond profit maximisation. However, human dignity is not being addressed at the same level, and this challenge is where Blueprint is uniquely positioned to make a profound impact.

This way of thinking that values every individual is a key differentiator of Blueprint. It is essential for preventing "purpose-washing" and upholding a higher standard of purpose among the major multinational corporates in Blueprint's network.

2. Continue focusing on convening and facilitating events for top leaders, and consider expanding the social contracts programme. The "carrot and stick" approach proved very effective, so we encourage Blueprint to continue on this path.

It is clear that Blueprint's niche is its convening power and direct access to high-level CEOs, to meaningfully engage with them such that they deeply consider what Purpose means to their organisation.

The longer-term direct engagement of the social contracts programme seems to be bearing fruits. We therefore highly recommend expanding it to other Corporates. Blueprint could also expand this programme by continuing to engage with Coaches and Consultants, who could then help replicate the work.

Blueprint has established an effective balance between using carrots and sticks, serving as both a mentor and an accountability agent. Blueprint's focus on creating a positive tone when engaging with corporates is an effective approach to promote win-wins that benefit both society and businesses, which is complementary to other organisations in the ecosystem that focus on compliance. It is recommended to continue pursuing this approach.

5. Recommendations

- 3. Continue with the current strategy to diversify its pool of donors, not charging corporates in return for a particular service. As Blueprint's work matures, be open to new revenue raising opportunities.**

The charity model proved essential to establish a non-commercial relationship between Blueprint and corporates. This helped preserve the purity of Blueprint's advice, and CEOs noted that they were more likely to engage at a deeper level and avoid temptations to "purpose-wash".

Blueprint has recently changed its funding model, to include corporate donations (that are not linked to any particular activity/service), in addition to philanthropic grants and Individual contributions. As a result, Blueprint was able to increase its financial sustainability.

However, Blueprint would benefit from better explaining to philanthropic donors the advantages of staying as an independent charity and having a diversified pool of donors, instead of relying solely on corporate donations.

As Blueprint's work matures, for example, once the knowledgebase is launched and further developed, it could become an opportunity for Blueprint to develop a fee-based service/training for coaches and consultants to use the information.

- 4. Conduct a systems-level workshop to help map the evolving purpose-ecosystem and better identify Blueprint's scaling path.**

Blueprint could benefit from promoting a systems-level workshop together with other relevant stakeholders in the ecosystem. It will likely help Blueprint on several fronts:

- Further explore/explain "how change happens" in terms of: i) how corporates change into more purposeful business over time; and ii) what is Blueprint's role in this change;
- Systematically review levers of change and leverage points, which in turn will help Blueprint revisit its original assumptions and recalibrate its strategy;
- Better identify Blueprint's most strategic partners to collaborate with;
- Help identify (and communicate to others) the best scaling strategy/path for Blueprint.

5. Recommendations

5. **Raise Blueprint's profile to attract the wider attention of those Blueprint aims to influence as well as donors; and continue improving strategic communications.**

Even though Blueprint is already active in social media and promotes several events, we have identified that strategic communications still has room for improvement. We recommend to focus on communications that:

- Clarify the transformative value of Blueprint's work with clear examples of impact, rather than only providing a list of activities being conducted;
- Develop clear messaging about how organisations could potentially operationalise Blueprint's deep thinking (e.g., based on lessons learned from social contracts);
- Is strategic and identify Blueprint's target audience (corporates it is trying to influence, as well as donors to help secure financial sustainability) and customise its messaging to address specific expectations and needs.

A more effective and targeted communication strategy will likely help raise Blueprint's profile.



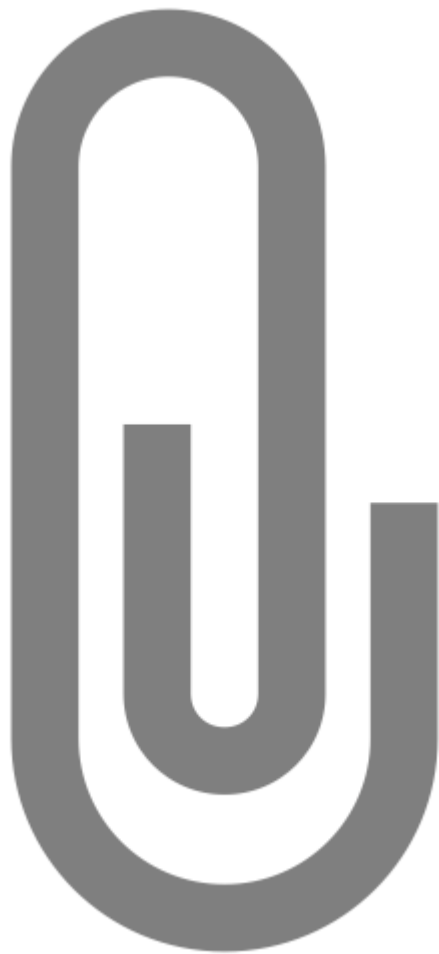
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Annexes

- List of stakeholders interviewed
- Abbreviations
- References

List of stakeholders interviewed (28)

NAME	ORGANISATION
Charles Wookey	Blueprint for Better Business
Soulla Kyriacou	Blueprint for Better Business
Dee Corrigan	Blueprint for Better Business
Sue Garrard	Sue Garrard Consulting Ltd.
Andrew Hill	Financial Times
Loughlin Hickey	retired from KPMG
Brendan McCafferty	Brightside Group
David Nussbaum	The Elders
Jon Lewis	Capita
Vince Clancy	Turner & Townsend
Olly Houlbourn	NatWest
Eoghan O’Lionaird	James Fisher
Liv Garfield	Severn Trent
Tim Jarratt	National Grid

NAME	ORGANISATION
Leon Kamhi	Federated Hermes
Helen Alford	Pontifical University of Saint Thomas
Alex Edmans	London Business School
Rebecca Henderson	Harvard Business School
Colin Mayer	Saïd Business School, Oxford University
Chris Turner	B Lab (UK)
Matt Peacock	Blurred
Caroline Bryant	Porticus
Jane Leek	Porticus
Eleanor Marsden	Syder Foundation
Diane Buczynski-Buchonnet	Oak Foundation
Andrea Hartley	Skating Panda
John Rosling	Contexis
Caroline Mason	Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

Abbreviations

CEO	chief executive officer
ESG	Environmental, Social, and (Corporate) Governance
FTSE	Financial Times Stock Exchange
GBP	British pound (£)
HNWI	high-net-worth individuals
HR	human resources
KPIs	key performance indicators
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
PLC	publicly listed company
PPT	power point
SA	Sustainability Advisory
SMEs	small and mid-size enterprises
UK	United Kingdom
UN SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

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Blueprint's Response

to the Learning evaluation conducted by Sustainability Advisory

Blueprint's Response

to the Learning evaluation conducted by Sustainability Advisory

Evaluation's findings and recommendations	Blueprint's response
<p>When corporates began applying the Principles, they experienced difficulty deciding what specific actions to take, and realised the Principles were not easily operationalised, requiring more brainstorming and engagement with Blueprint.</p>	<p>We agree that the Principles and Framework alone are not sufficient, and companies need further help in putting Blueprint's thinking into practice. Through our 1:1 work, and especially the longer term social contracts with major companies, we have now gained a depth of insight into the journey a company goes on, and some of the crucial steps necessary. We are making this learning available online through our knowledgebase (see below) which will include our workshops and tools so others can use them without working with Blueprint directly. We are also socializing this thinking through our coaches and consultants network to help amplify our impact and enable them to use our thinking in their practice.</p>
<p>Blueprint was recognized.... as one of the few actors that has in-depth ideas on how to promote Purpose.. [but] ...is likely to be better off by building on the richness of thought it has been building with corporates and other partners...</p>	<p>We agree with this finding and are conscious that in seeking to 'scale' our impact we should build on the richness of our thinking and what we are learning from our 1:1 work. One way we are approaching this is through capturing what we are learning in an online 'knowledgebase': which is essentially an online course on how to use our thinking aimed at practitioners in companies, coaches and consultants to business and others passionate about purpose-led business. This can also be used as an online resource by business to help them to become purpose-led. Once it is live (target date end 2021) we plan to use the knowledgebase to reach a broader audience, including through alliances and partnerships with other organisations.</p>

Blueprint's Response

to the Learning evaluation conducted by Sustainability Advisory (cont'd)

Evaluation's findings and recommendations	Blueprint's management response
Blueprint's team has been efficient and effective, but there seems to be over reliance on its CEO	Over the last 12 months or so we have been working to be less reliant on our CEO. For example, both our COO (Soulla) and our Head of Corporate Engagement (Dee) have been increasingly representing Blueprint at external forums and events. In particular, our last 3 webinars have been hosted by Dee (see Events A Blueprint for Better Business (blueprintforbusiness.org)). This is increasingly important as our CEO is stepping down in April 2022.
This way of thinking that values every individual is a key differentiator of Blueprint. It is essential for preventing "purpose-washing" and upholding a higher standard of purpose among the major multinational corporates in Blueprint's network.	We agree with this and are planning to increase the focus on this element of our work over the next 12 months or so. It will be assisted by a renewed focus we plan on bringing societal voices together with business leaders, so that the wider social and human impact of business is kept front of mind through better quality dialogue between businesses and the people they serve.
Blueprint would benefit from better explaining to philanthropic donors the advantages of staying as an independent charity and having a diversified pool of donors, instead of relying solely on corporate donations.	As can be seen from the feedback from corporates, both our independence and the fact that we have a non-commercial relationship with companies are key differentiators and have been crucial to our impact. We recently decided to accept donations from business, and we want to ensure that this source of funding does not predominate over time, as we feel a mix of funding sources including from charitable foundations and individuals is essential in retaining this independence. We are an unusual charity in the way we work with business and feel the findings of this evaluation should be helpful in demonstrating the value of what we do in our work to help address some of the major issues facing our society and the planet.