

Purpose matters: Meeting the demand for corporate responsibility

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Hybrid working, a term referring to a work arrangement that allows employees to split their time between working remotely and working in the office, has been on the rise, accelerated by the pandemic. This shift in work dynamics, coupled with an unpredictable political and economic climate, has significantly influenced how people perceive their lives and the world around them. It has also reshaped their expectations of businesses.



Public perception towards businesses has changed since the pandemic, with the rise of hybrid working exemplifying one of those changes. Workers expect more from their employers, and customers expect more from the companies they buy from.

People want to feel more connected to their local communities, and they want their employers to make a positive impact. Indeed, [McKinsey's research shows](#) that 70% of employees define their life purpose by their work, noting that "Employees expect their jobs to bring a significant sense of purpose to their lives. Employers need to help meet this need or be prepared to lose talent to companies that will."

With this in mind, businesses must up their corporate responsibility. Here are five key ways your organisation can do this.

1. Ensure ethical supply chains and partnerships

A company's ethical stance affects customer and employee loyalty, but it's easy to forget that this extends to who that company does business with. Reviewing your supply chain and ensuring that it's ethical and sustainable is vital to meeting industry-wide sustainability targets and customer and staff expectations.

For example, it's essential to recognise that your business's emissions are only part of the story. According to the [CDP Global Supply Chain Report](#), supply chain emissions are an average of 11.4 times higher than operational

emissions, equating to [as much as 92% of a business's total emissions](#). [Addressing the supply chain](#) is critical to your environmental, social, and governance (ESG) efforts, giving your procurement team a vital role in your overall approach.

2. Do more for important causes

PwC's [Workforce of the Future](#) survey is among those that corroborate the claim that younger workers want to work for purpose-driven businesses, finding that "88% of them want to work for a company whose values reflect their own". It stands to reason, then, that your [talent attraction and retention can be boosted](#) by talking to your team about what causes they want to support and how.

This offers companies a unique opportunity to integrate social responsibility initiatives into their business models. One approach could be offering a paid day off for volunteering or endorsing apps like [forgood](#) to encourage and facilitate corporate volunteering.

3. Embrace a network of local flex spaces

A key advantage of hybrid flex spaces is their locality. They offer hubs near employees' homes, minimising daily commutes and encouraging eco-friendly travel like walking, cycling, or public transport over driving.

The benefits of a local workspace also come into play when we look at [the 15-Minute City](#). More than ever, urban planners and councils are introducing measures to enhance town environments. The aim is to turn "previously sleepy dormitory towns" into vibrant centres for work and community life," where commerce, accommodation, education, and greenery are all within reach—of course, cutting transport emissions and enhancing living conditions also. Flex spaces empower workers to spend more time in and around their community and enjoy local amenities.

In South Africa, industry accounts for the largest use of gas and electricity. Local workspaces, however, notably reduce building-related emissions, partly by maintaining higher occupancy rates and utilising more efficient energy systems, thus maximising resource use and minimising waste. In fact, IWG's own hybrid workspaces have been certified carbon neutral.

4. Upgrade to eco pension schemes

Several environmental advocates, such as the [Clean Creatives Pledge](#), have used social platforms to champion how leadership can better support their staff while helping the environment. This includes upgrading to [eco pensions](#), which is made possible thanks to a growing range of ESG funds. Robeco defines these [Pure play asset management | Robeco Africa](#) as "portfolios of equities and/or bonds for which environmental, social and governance factors have been integrated into the investment process." Take inspiration from the local governments [from carbon](#) in their pension schemes.

5. Start the journey to B-Corp status

B-Corp status is the ultimate mark of a company's ethical credentials. [B-Corps](#) reportedly benefit from a raft of advantages, including: "Faster growth in turnover and employee headcount and higher expectations about future growth; greater levels of employee retention, engagement and diversity; more robust governance processes; greater focus on civic and community engagement; higher levels of innovation and success at securing external finance." In short, embarking on the B-Corp journey elevates your company's ethical standing and catalyses broad-reaching positive change.

These five ideas are a great starting point for strengthening corporate responsibility measures. If you're wondering where to begin, discover how an enterprise-level [IWG membership](#) can help your company move towards a hybrid model and enhance your corporate responsibility credentials, with advice on your workplace strategy and access to

4,000 flexible workspaces worldwide.

About IWG PLC

IWG is the global leader in hybrid work solutions and workspace brands. We create personal, financial, and strategic value for businesses of every size. From some of the most exciting companies and well-known organisations on the planet to individuals and the next generation of industry leaders. All of them harness the power of IWG's hybrid working platform to increase their productivity, efficiency, agility, and market proximity. IWG's unrivalled network coverage includes approximately 4,000 locations across more than 120 countries and 83% of Fortune 500 companies are amongst our growing customer base.

Through our brands including Regus, Spaces, HQ and Signature, we help millions of people and their businesses to work more productively. We do so by providing the world's leading hybrid work platform with professional, inspiring and collaborative workspaces and digital services all available via the IWG app.

For more information visit www.iwgplc.com and for more information on partnering with IWG, see: <https://www.iwgplc.com/develop-a-location>.

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