

SABOTEUR

Foundations for freedom

The Saboteur Brand Toolkit
Organisational purpose



**SA
BO**

Get in touch

A strong organisational purpose is just one of the 'foundations for freedom' that great brands put in place in order to escape their constraints and achieve their potential.

If you would like to find out more about our toolkit, who it's already worked for, and how we can use it to set your brand free, please get in touch.

Saboteur Team

hello@saboteur.studio

+44 203 8839 559



Contents

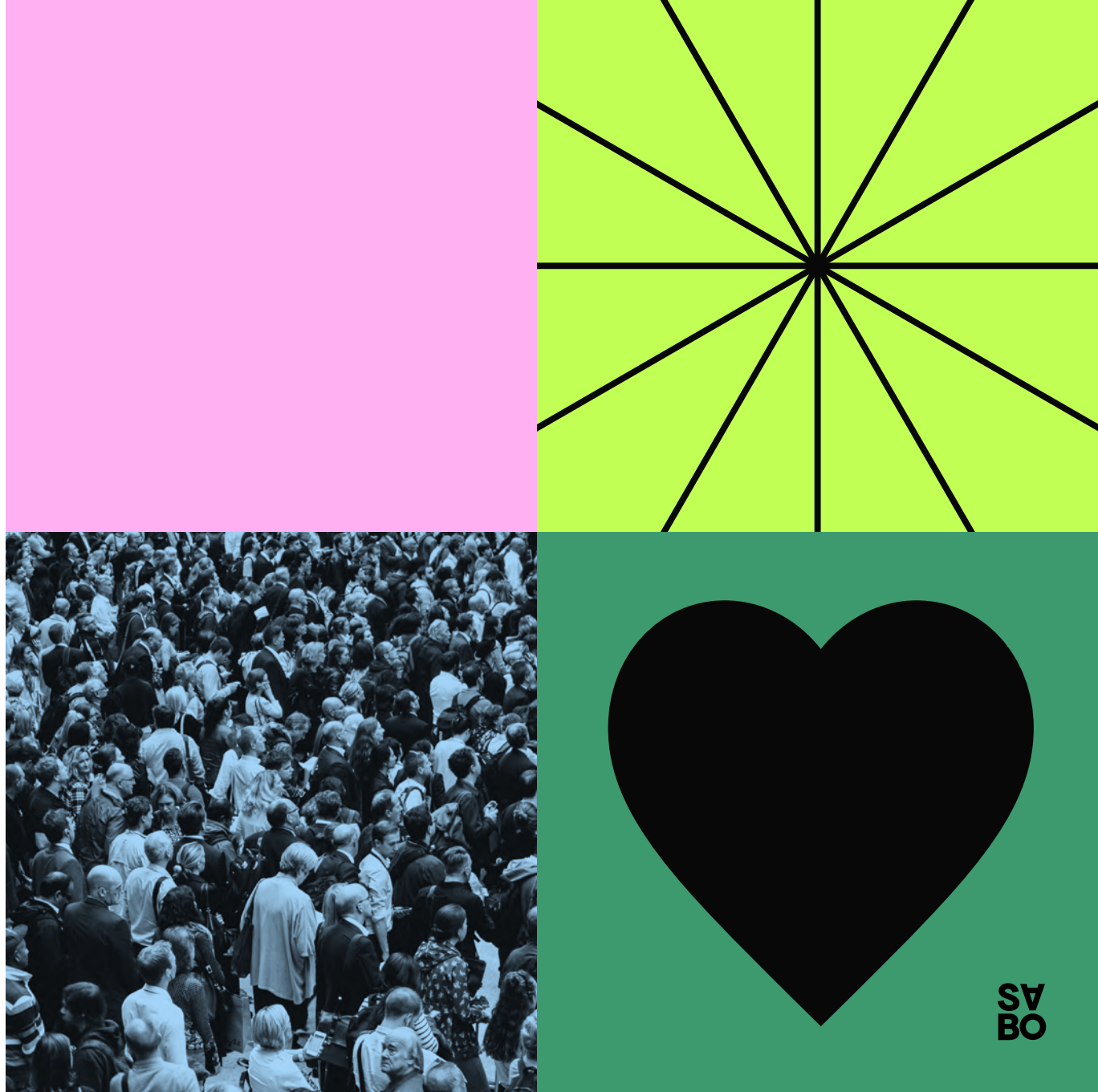
1. What is organisational purpose?
2. Features of a compelling purpose
3. FAQs
 - How do I uncover my organisation's purpose?
 - How do I write a purpose statement?
 - How do I create a purpose that inspires everyone?
 - What's the difference between organisational purpose and ...?
4. The relationship between organisational purpose and other brand elements
5. Further reading

Definitions

Organisational purpose

An organisation's meaningful and enduring reason to exist, which aligns with long-term performance objectives, provides a clear context for daily decision making, and unifies and motivates relevant stakeholders.

Note: Purpose can also be referred to as your organisation's 'why' or its 'cause'



The common features of a **compelling purpose**



1. Noble

Captures the positive impact you want to make on the wider world, not just on the lives of your employees, shareholders, or most valuable customers.

“To accelerate the world’s transition to sustainable energy”

- Tesla

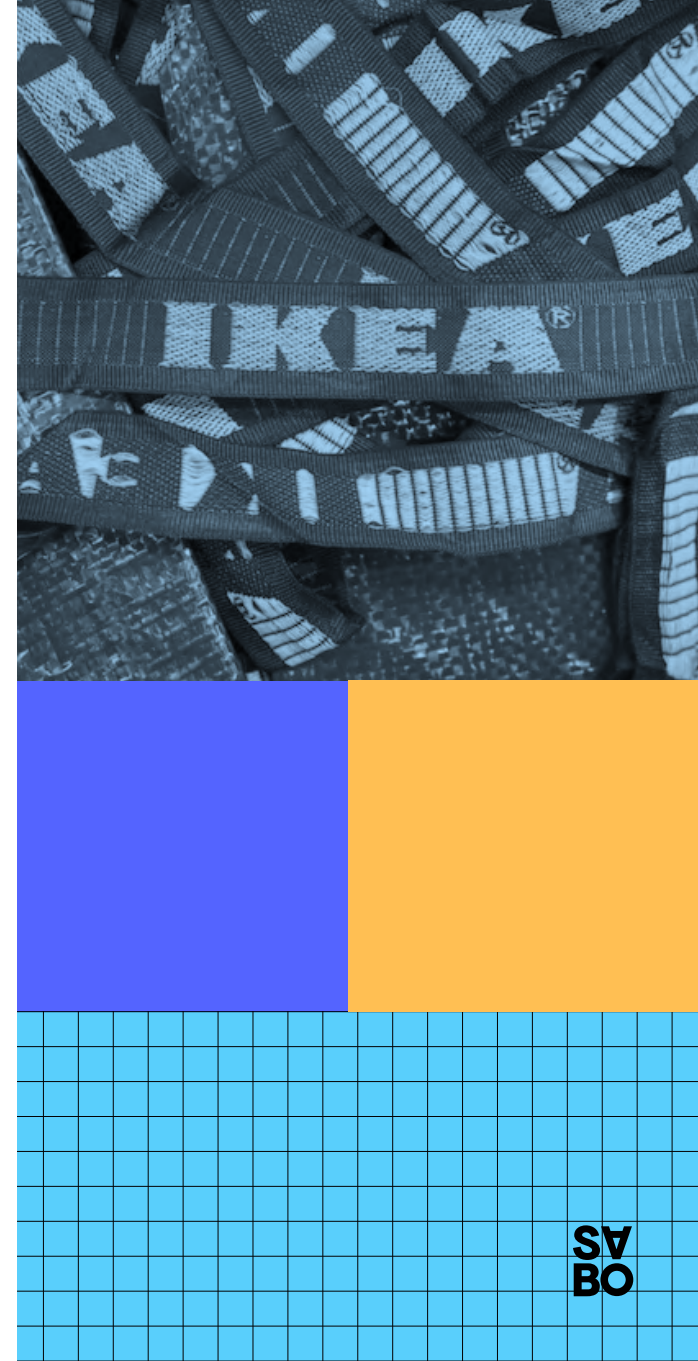


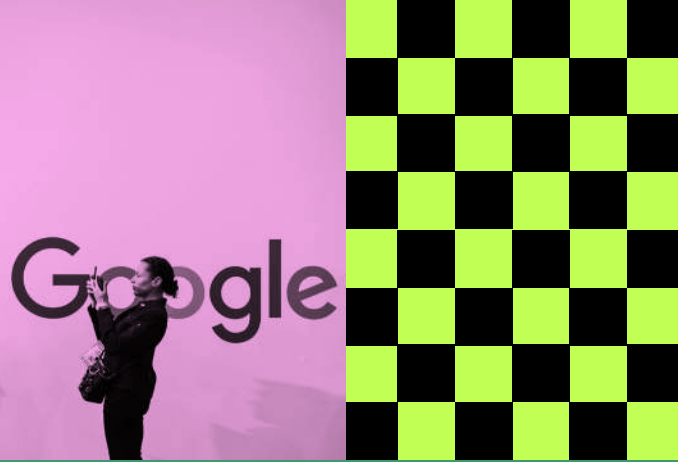
2. Commercial

Consistent with the way the business makes money. As opposed to a separate, non-commercial objective (such as CSR).

**“To create a better
everyday life for
the many people”**

- Ikea





3. Authentic

Believable internally, credible externally. Consistent with the brand's heritage. Who you already are at your best, not just what you hope to become known for one day.

“To organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful”

- Google

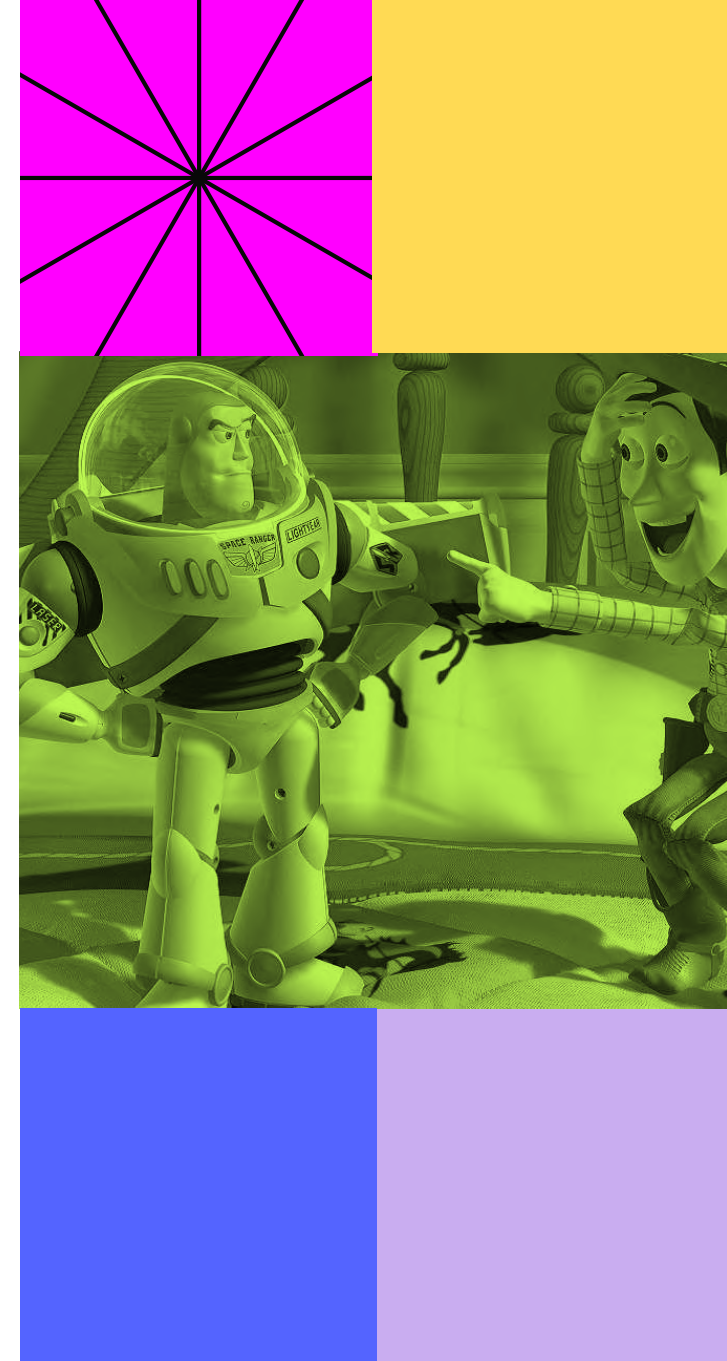


4. Enduring

An eternal cause that creates lifelong motivation and long-term value.

**“To use our
imagination to
bring happiness
to millions”**

- Disney



5. Simple

So everybody can easily understand it, cite it, and think of ways to help fulfil it. One sentence. One, unifying thought.

**“To bring
the world
within reach”**

- *Expedia Group*



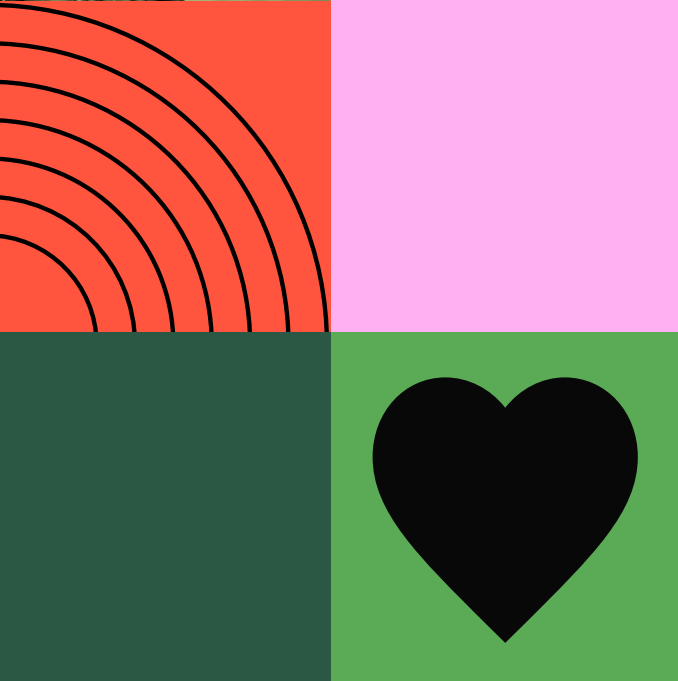


6. Actionable

Specific enough that anyone can think of new ways to help accomplish it. Not generalisms like “make life better”, which are not specific enough to be used to generate ideas or guide decisions.

“To teach people that what they put in their bodies makes a difference, to their own health and the planet as a whole”

- *Whole Foods Market*





7. Open-ended

Not so specific as to close off possibilities. It must be open-ended, with the potential to extend to other industry verticals & use cases. Tells us 'why', but not 'how'.

**“To bring inspiration
and innovation to every
athlete in the world”***

***If you have a body, you
are an athlete.**

- Nike

8. Inspiring

Appeals to fundamental human desires or addresses deeply held aspirations.

**“To create a world
where anyone can
belong anywhere”**

- AirBnb



The common features of a compelling purpose

1. Noble

Captures the positive impact you want to make on the wider world, not just on the lives of your employees, shareholders, or most valuable customers.

2. Commercial

Consistent with the way the business makes money. As opposed to a separate, non-commercial objective [such as CSR].

3. Authentic

Believable internally, credible externally. Consistent with the brand's heritage. Who you already are at your best, not just what you hope to become known for one day.

4. Enduring

An eternal cause that creates lifelong motivation and long-term value.

5. Simple

So everybody can easily understand it, cite it, and think of ways to help fulfil it. One sentence. One, unifying thought.

6. Actionable

Specific enough that anyone can think of new ways to help accomplish it. Not generalisms like “make life better”, which are not specific enough to be used to generate ideas or guide decisions.

7. Open-ended

Not so specific as to close off possibilities. It must be open-ended, with the potential to extend to other industry verticals & use cases. Tells us ‘why’, but not ‘how’.

8. Inspiring

Appeals to fundamental human desires or addresses deeply held aspirations.



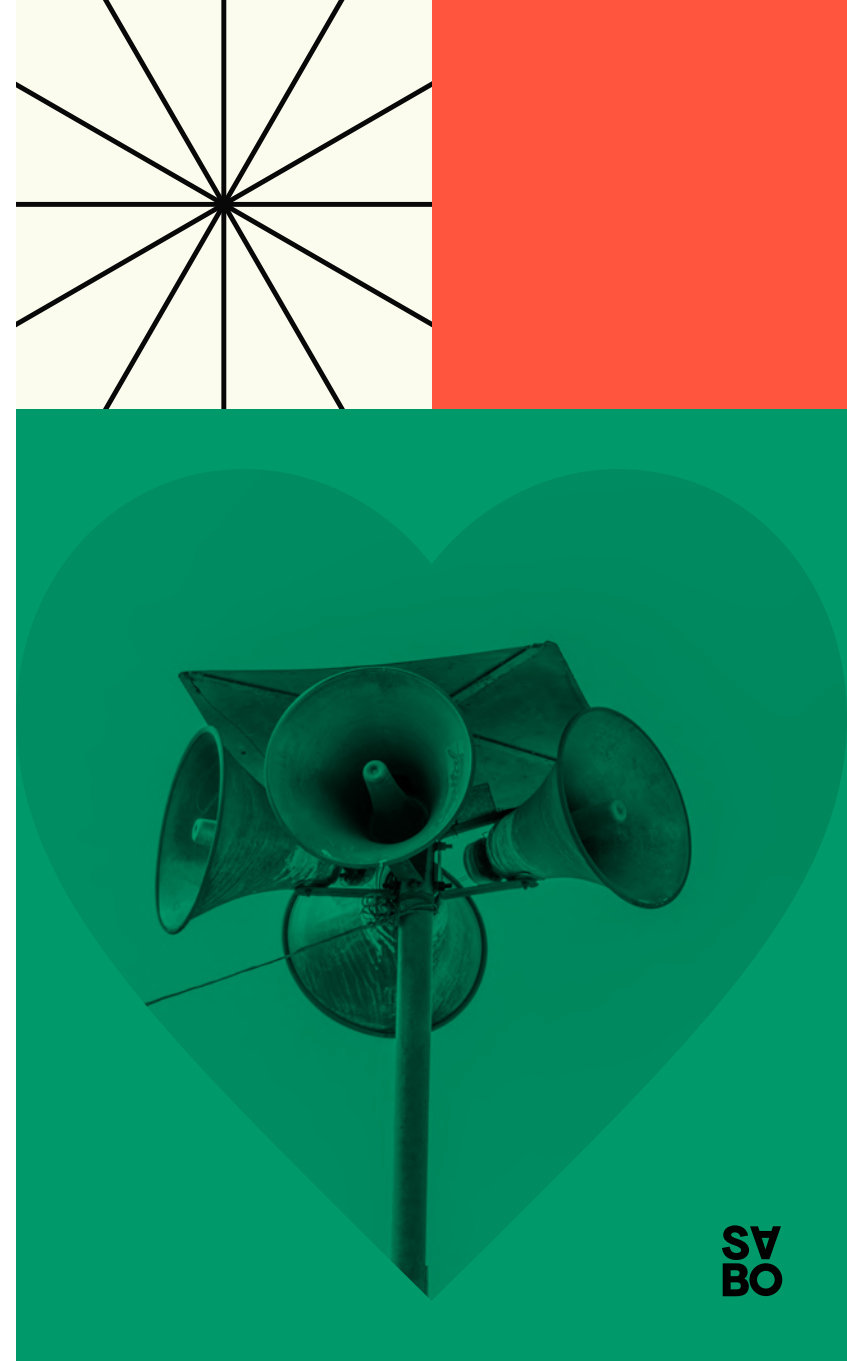
How do I uncover my **organisation's purpose?**



How do I uncover my organisation's purpose?

1. Gather stories that represent your organisation **at its best**

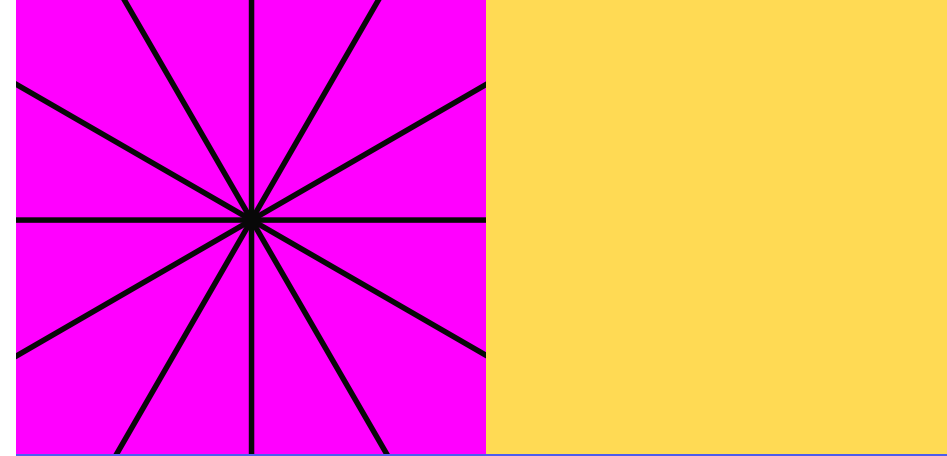
Make sure they're specific about what the organisation did, who benefitted, why it's a story to be proud of and how it made the people involved feel. Remember, we're looking for emotional reasons, not rational ones. See page 21 for advice on how to do this.



How do I uncover my organisation's purpose?

2. Shortlist those that **“ring true”**

These will be stories that make you think “that’s us in a nutshell”.



How do I uncover my organisation's purpose?

3. Identify what those stories **have in common**

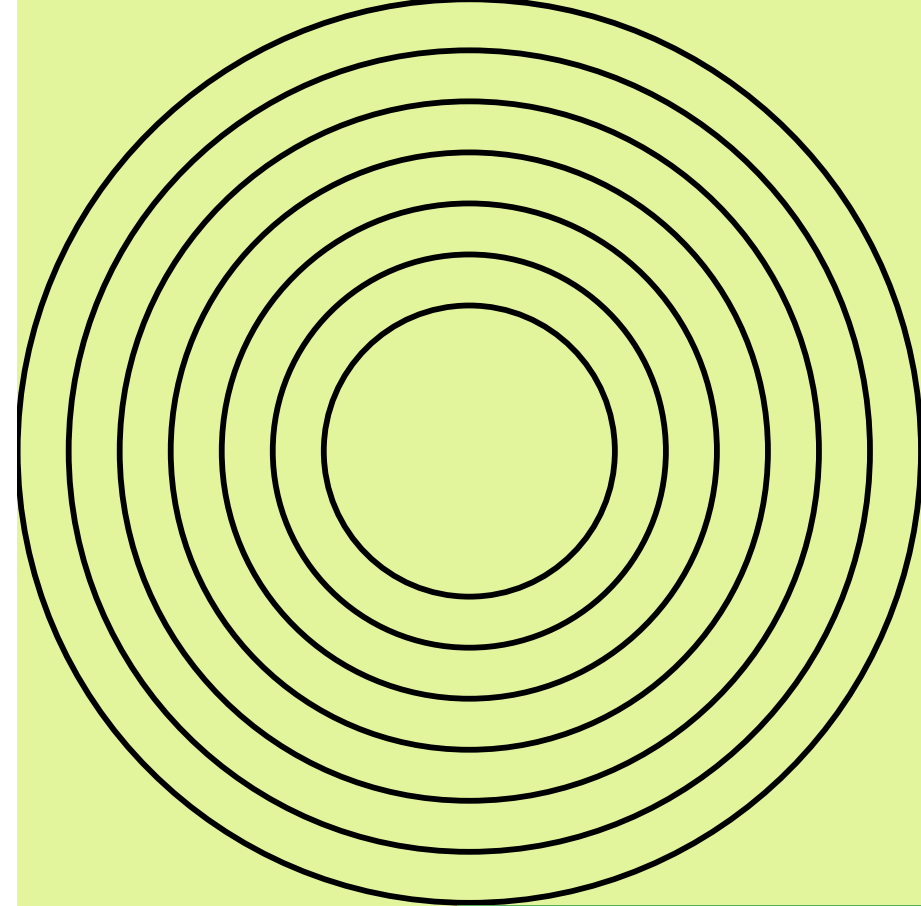
Across these stories, what is similar about the contribution the organisation made, and the impact it had on others?



How do I uncover my organisation's purpose?

4. Write as many **purpose statements** as you can

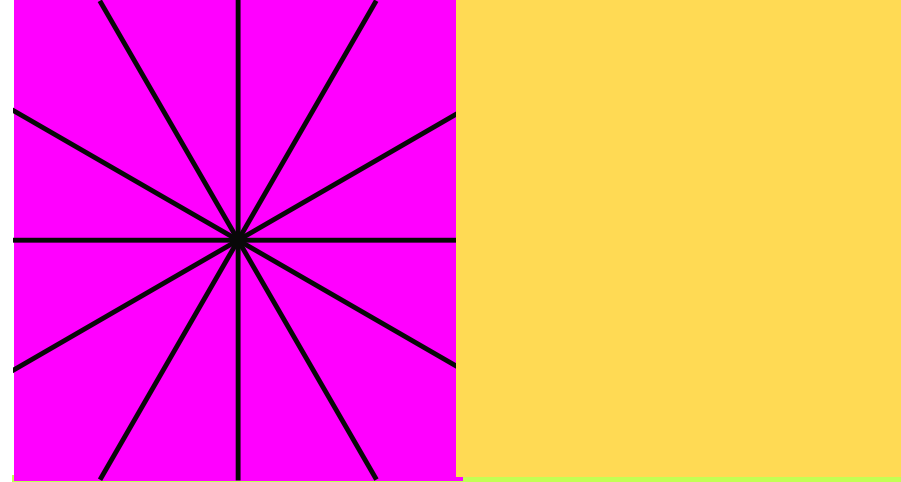
Great purpose statements typically begin with the word 'to', as in 'To bring the world within reach'. This makes it clear that the purpose is a lofty goal we are striving towards. An alternative phrasing like 'bringing the world within reach' implies the goal is already been achieved, and no additional effort is necessary.



How do I uncover my organisation's purpose?

5. **Test your statements** with the people they represent

Ask them to react to the feeling behind the words, and not the wording itself. [Wordsmithing is important but will be done at a later stage.] Ask them to imagine what could be possible inside an organisation with each purpose.



Advice for gathering **stories** **about your organisation**

Ask for specific examples, not a list of capabilities:

“Of all the successes you’ve had as a company, tell me all about the one that stands out.”

Make sure the stories include what they did:

“In this story, what – specifically – did you do?”

Uncover emotional reasons for doing things:

“Salary aside, what motivates you to do this kind of work?”

Make sure you discover the company’s origin story:

“What was this organisation originally set up to achieve?”

Take stories from all corners of the organisation:

Otherwise, you risk only identifying the purpose of an individual or department. Not the whole organisation.

Focus on the bigger picture, not just the issues facing the interviewee and their team:

“If this company were to disappear today, what would the world lose?”

Make sure you speak to these 3 types of people:

Standard bearers: Individuals who are especially proud to work at the organisation and most able to articulate company at its best. Long-servers, who have more stories. New starters, who will most likely have more objective insights.



How do I write a **purpose statement?**



What you give **+** **What the world gets**

Ultimately the more experienced you are as a writer, the better your statement is likely to be.

But if you don't have the option of a professional writer, this formula can help you get to a strong statement on your own.



What you give
+
What the world gets

To help our clients
create such high levels
of value that together
we set new standards
of excellence in our
respective industries.

BAIN & COMPANY 



What you give
+
What the world gets

To give people
the power to build
community and bring
the world closer
together.

 Meta



What you give
+
What the world gets

To empower people
and create economic
opportunity for all



03 FAQ

How do
I create a
purpose that
**inspires
everyone?**



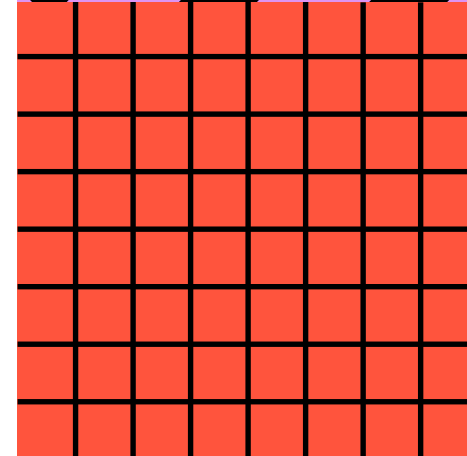
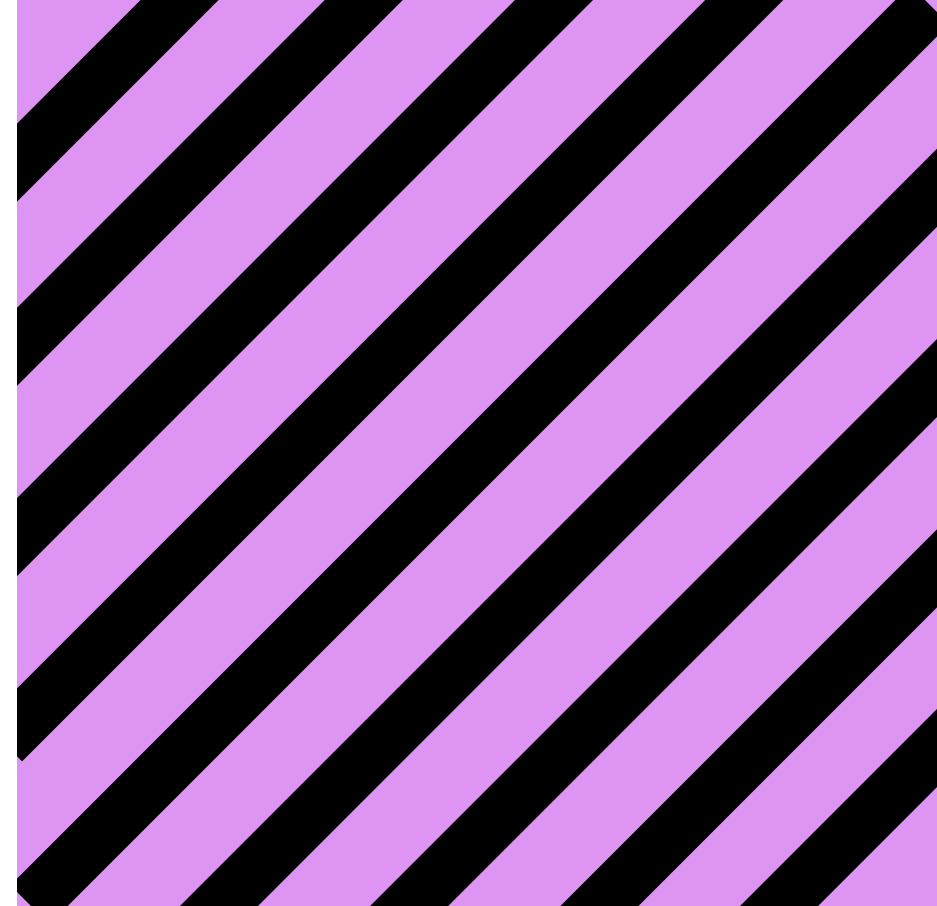
Inspiring everyone

To be effective, an organisational purpose must be motivating to people throughout a company, from top to bottom, and regardless of individual backgrounds or personal values.

One way it can achieve this level of universal appeal is by addressing a human desire so fundamental that it is common to all of us.

Below, you'll see a list of 8 fundamental human desires. [These have been compiled by cross-referencing various psychological studies, but other lists are available].

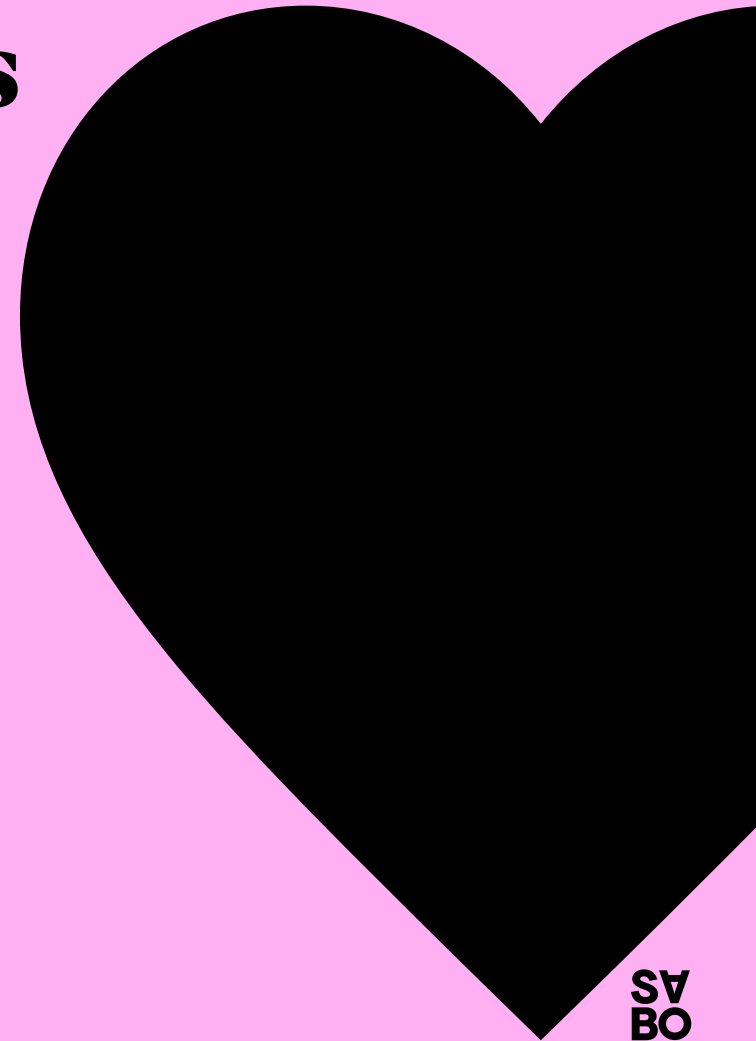
Over the following pages you'll see examples of great organisations who've built unifying purpose statements by appealing to these universal desires.



**SA
BO**

8 fundamental human desires

1. To escape danger
2. To avoid hunger or thirst
3. To find comfortable living conditions
4. To attract a mate
5. To care for our children
6. To be accepted by the group
7. To be superior
8. To leave a legacy



1.

To escape danger

“To protect
individuals
wherever justice,
fairness, freedom
& truth are denied”

Amnesty International



2.

To avoid hunger or thirst

A background image showing several Coca-Cola cans on a purple surface. The cans are arranged in a grid-like pattern, with some in the foreground and others in the background. The cans are silver with the Coca-Cola logo and the word 'ORIGINAL' visible. The purple surface has a subtle gradient and some shadows from the cans.

“To refresh the
world and make
a difference”

The Coca-Cola Company



3.

To find comfortable living conditions

“To create a better
everyday life for
the many people”

IKEA



4.

To attract a mate

“To spark
meaningful
connections”

Match Group



5.

To care for our children

“To inspire and
develop the
builders of
tomorrow”

LEGO



6.

**To be
accepted
by the
group**

“To create a world
where anyone can
belong anywhere”

AirBnb



7.

To be superior

“To enable
Americans
to perform
extraordinary
acts in the face
of emergencies”
American Red Cross



8.

To leave a legacy

“To make humans
a multi-planetary
species”

SpaceX



What's the difference between **organisational purpose** and...?



Organisational purpose

- Describes the impact you have on the world when you're at your best
- Provides a context for daily decision making across the organisation

VS.

Brand Positioning

- Sets out how your organisation wishes to be perceived [in order to reach its objectives]
- Provides guidance for creative decisions that might bring about these perceptions changes, including visual identity, comms and experience design



Organisational purpose

- Primarily employee-facing
- Used to increase employee motivation, loyalty and alignment to your organisational objectives by aligning the needs of the business with the fundamental human values of the people it employs

VS.

Purpose-driven marketing

- Primarily consumer-facing
- Used to improve marketing performance by persuading consumers that your company, product, or service shares their values



What's the difference between organisational purpose and...?

Organisational purpose

The difference you're trying to make in the world

vs.

Brand vision

A vivid, imaginative conception or view of how the world will look once your purpose has been largely realized

vs.

Brand mission

The core strategy you've undertaken to fulfil that purpose



The relationship
between
**organisational
purpose and
other brand
elements**



- ORGANISATIONAL PURPOSE
- SERVICE
- STRATEGIC DELIVERABLE
- COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORM
- COMMUNICATIONS APPLICATIONS
- EXPERIENCE PLATFORM
- EXPERIENCE APPLICATIONS

<div> <div>BUSINESS STRATEGY ARTICULATION</div> <div>Making the business's strategic objectives clear and compelling to all relevant stakeholders, especially those inside the organisation</div> <div>Organisational purpose statement, vision statement, mission statement, corporate values</div> </div>						
<div> <div>BRAND PORTFOLIO AND ARCHITECTURE STRATEGY</div> <div>Deciding the number and types of brand needed to reach an organisation's objectives</div> </div>						
<div> <div>BRAND POSITIONING</div> <div>Defining how the brand must be perceived for the business to reach its objectives <i>(key behaviour changes: purchase, invest, advocate, create)</i></div> <div>Positioning statement, brand essence [a.k.a. 'strategic platform' or 'positioning idea'], brand narrative, brand personality, brand messaging</div> </div>					<div> <div>EMPLOYER VALUE PROPOSITION (EVP)</div> <div>Defining what you stand for, offer, and require as an employer <i>(key behaviour changes: apply, don't apply, align, stay)</i></div> <div>EVP statement, essence, narrative, messaging</div> </div>	
<div> <div>BRAND NAMING</div> <div>Claiming or reinforcing the brand's position through its choice of name</div> </div>	<div> <div>VISUAL IDENTITY</div> <div>Claiming or reinforcing the brand's position through its look and feel</div> </div>	<div> <div>VERBAL IDENTITY</div> <div>Claiming or reinforcing the brand's position through its use of language</div> </div>	<div> <div>BRAND CAMPAIGN</div> <div>Claiming or reinforcing the brand's position through a series of ads or activations</div> </div>	<div> <div>CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE</div> <div>Claiming or reinforcing the brand's position through customer interaction</div> </div>	<div> <div>TALENT CAMPAIGN</div> <div>Claiming or reinforcing the EVP through a series of ads or activations</div> </div>	<div> <div>EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE</div> <div>Helping to realise the business strategy & EVP through employee interaction</div> </div>
	<div> <div>Campaign platform or 'campaign idea'</div> <div>Inspires and unifies all design applications</div> <div>Expressed as a sentence or one liner</div> </div>	<div> <div>Verbal identity platform</div> <div>Inspires and unifies all written and spoken applications</div> <div>Expressed as techniques and a one liner</div> </div>	<div> <div>Campaign platform or 'campaign idea'</div> <div>Inspires and unifies a campaign's elements and executions</div> <div>Expressed as a short phrase</div> </div>	<div> <div>Customer experience platform</div> <div>Inspires and unifies all signature experiences</div> <div>Expressed as customer experience pillars and/or a short phrase</div> </div>	<div> <div>Campaign platform or 'campaign idea'</div> <div>Inspires and unifies a campaign's elements and executions</div> <div>Expressed as a short phrase</div> </div>	<div> <div>Employee experience pillars</div> <div>Inspires and unifies a set of internal strategic initiatives</div> <div>Expressed as a shared belief, behaviour, or 'mantra'</div> </div>
	<div> <div>Design applications, graphic device, logo, colour palette, motion principles, photography, illustration, brand tagline</div> </div>	<div> <div>Headline examples, internal comms examples, speeches, press release examples, etc.</div> </div>	<div> <div>Campaign applications including design, copywriting, campaign tagline, etc. [Can be customer, talent, or employee facing]</div> </div>	<div> <div>Signature brand experiences, customer service flourishes, hero products and services, key features in physical environments, etc.</div> </div>	<div> <div>Campaign applications including design, copywriting, campaign tagline, etc. [Can be customer, talent, or employee facing]</div> </div>	<div> <div>Employee engagement initiatives, events, rituals, internal initiatives, policy, codes of conduct, etc.</div> </div>



Further **reading**

If you want to find out more about organisational purpose, we recommend the following titles.



Further reading

1. Find your Why: A Practical Guide for Discovering Purpose for You and Your Team

By Simon Sinek
Portfolio [2017]

2. Grow: How Ideals Power Growth and Profit at the World's 50 Greatest Companies

By Jim Stengel
Virgin Books [2012]

3. Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us

By Daniel H. Pink
Riverhead [2009]

4. Conscious Capitalism: Liberating the Heroic Spirit of Business

By John Mackey & Raj Sisodia
Harvard Business Review Press [2014]

5. The Purpose Economy: How Your Desire for Impact, Personal Growth and Community Is Changing the World

By Aaron Hurst
Elevate [2016]

6. Cashvertising: How to Use More than 100 Secrets of Ad-agency Psychology to Make Big Money Selling Anything to Anyone

By Drew Eric Whitman
Career Press [2008]



Get in touch

A strong organisational purpose is just one of the 'foundations for freedom' that great brands put in place in order to escape their constraints and achieve their potential.

If you would like to find out more about our toolkit, who it's already worked for, and how we can use it to set your brand free, please get in touch.

Saboteur Team

hello@saboteur.studio

+44 203 8839 559

