



WELLBEING  
ECONOMY  
ALLIANCE

A Guide to  
the Alternatives  
to Business  
as Usual

# The Business of Wellbeing

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the Alternatives  
to Business  
as Usual



[wellbeingeconomy.org](https://wellbeingeconomy.org)  
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# Imprint

## The Business of Wellbeing

A Guide to the Alternatives to Business as Usual  
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This guide has been developed by the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll) in collaboration with SenseTribe Consulting ([www.sensetribe.com](http://www.sensetribe.com)) by means of a participatory process.

### How this guide was created:

#### The participatory process in a nutshell

The stakeholder participation process included several collaborative creation sessions with a steering group of business and wellbeing economy experts. Together with this group we jointly defined the guide's scope, target audience, structure and content. Ten stakeholder interviews were carried out to gather input from different solutions providers and to give us insights on challenges facing decision makers. Based on the input gathered we defined 7 key business dimensions, developed a self-assessment tool and a solutions framework, and carried out interviews with representatives of the organisations in the featured case studies.

Please note that the aim of this guide is not to give a complete overview of solutions but rather to inspire decision makers of mid-sized organizations to explore the Wellbeing Economy space. If you have suggestions, or recommendations to add to the next version of the guide, please contact the Wellbeing Economy Alliance.

## Editorial team

### Copywriting & stakeholder process:

Mira Bangel & Michael Weatherhead

### Proofreading and online publishing:

Lisa Hough-Stewart & Damien Concordel

### Support with publishing and coordination:

Raffaella Toticchi

### Support with stakeholder interviews and harvesting:

Angela Souza

### Illustrations & graphic design:

Marina Roa & Diana Cuéllar Flores

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Patrick Andrews (Human Organising Co), Kevin Bayuk (Lift Economy), Gilles Concordel (Tutator), Sarah Deas, Brook Dixon (Delos Delta), Lili David & James Priest (Sociocracy 3.0), Frank Dixon (Global Systems Change), Javier Dosuna (Lancor), Andreas Eke (Futuro Forestal), Christopher Evatt, Adam Garfunkel (Junxion), Rahema Isa (Womanomics), Linda Johnston (Auchrannie resort), Miki Kashtan (CNVC / The Fearless Heart), Teun van de Keuken (Tony's Chocolonely), Tomas de Lara (Sistema B), Marcos Leite (OLX Brazil), Hunter Lovins (Nature Capitalism Solutions), Matt Meyer (ECG), Martin Rich (Future Fit), Mike Rowlands (Junxion), Erinch Sahan (WFTO), Andrea Somma Genta (Omina Foundation), Hugo Spowers (Riversimple), Alan Thurnborrow (BITC), Kathrine Trebeck (WEAll), Daniel Truran, James Vaccaro (Triodos), Daniel Wahl (Regenerative cultures), Dave Weatherhead (Kinesys), Sandra White (ECG),

Please contact us if you want to contribute to future editions of this guide: [info@wellbeingeconomy.org](mailto:info@wellbeingeconomy.org)

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Preface.

## Business at a crossroads



Often in life we enthusiastically strive to achieve one goal and only notice further down the road that what we originally had in mind no longer serves us. This is either because external factors have changed, or because we realise that we no longer find meaning in what we do. Am I really serving my purpose? What actually is it?

**We may have built a successful business and got to a crossroads where we feel the need to reinvent ourselves.** Do I need to choose between people, the planet and profit? And what is the benefit of integrating wellbeing in business in the first place?

**“Business does not have a soul. The sole purpose of business is simply to keep six key stakeholders happy: customers, employees, suppliers, shareholders, the government and local communities.”**

Gilles Concorde, former President and Chair of Redback Networks and Founder of Tutor Foundation.

It is often an intrinsic motivation or a personal experience that drives someone to rethink business as usual.

**“The other day I saw my 12-year old daughter standing on a statue at a climate march. I am proud of her activism. And I’m also proud we have decided to stop working with clients that emit excessive amounts of CO2 and to tell them why we have made this choice.”**

Adam Garfunkel, Co-owner at Junxion Strategy.

So, what exactly is a wellbeing economy and how can we put it into practice? What are the options and what is the path that makes sense in each particular business context? **There are many existing alternatives to ‘business as usual’ and organisations often don’t know what their options are and which one may suit them most.**

We hope this guide will help you navigate the alternatives and find inspiration during your first steps towards a wellbeing economy. **The sections will give you an overview of business dimensions to consider and the guide will ultimately point you to practical solutions and partners that can offer helpful support.**

This guide was co-created by WEAll, SenseTribe and the many other partners and stakeholders listed in the acknowledgements, and we plan to regularly update it.



# Introduction

## The role of business in a wellbeing economy

Business plays a vital role in the transition to a wellbeing economy. It is a vehicle for creativity and innovation. And it has the potential to be one of the most effective advocates for change.

Working together with government and civil society, businesses have a major role to play in creating the means of meeting human and ecological needs.

In our current system, finance and the economy tend to serve themselves rather than serving society and the environment. A wellbeing economy is an alternative vision for the economic system, in which finance serves and incentivises the economy, and the economy serves society – and the environment – as part of its intrinsic purpose.

**“Today society and the environment are serving business, when business needs to be the servant of society.”**

Martin Rich, Co-Founder and Executive Director at Future Fit.

Given the [complexity of the ecosystem](#)<sup>1</sup> we are part of, there is no single path that can help a business transition to a new economic system, and no single model for a business that flourishes in the economy of the future.

We will need multi-stakeholder collaborations to address today's most pressing issues. We will need businesses to play a vital role in driving innovation and finding solutions that allow society and the environment to flourish.

Here are a few elements that such businesses are likely to have in common:

- **Connection** - a corporate culture that aligns the organisational purpose with collective values.
- **Dignity** - a business model that creates the means for employees, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders to live with dignity.
- **Fairness** - a business model that distributes wealth in a way that supports equity and equal opportunities.
- **Nature** - use of natural resources that restores them into ecosystems in ways that support regeneration instead of causing harm.
- **Participation** - balanced and values-based relationships with all stakeholders.

### Baby steps or a big leap?

Most businesses take small incremental steps to improve their impact on society and the environment, without endangering profits.

In times where we are overshooting planetary boundaries, many argue that it is simply not enough to be “sustainable”.

We need to build [regenerative systems](#)<sup>2</sup> that allow us to make up for the damage caused and add value back into the ecosystems in which we live. Kate Raworth has developed a [corporate to-do list](#)<sup>3</sup> to help businesses respond to the environmental crisis. She lays out stages ranging from ‘doing nothing’ to ‘being regenerative’.

**But getting to where we need to be requires building a bridge, and bridges are built simultaneously from both sides.**

**“There is a paradigm shift between a new (transformative) economy and the old economy.”**

Kevin Bayuk, Lift Economy

**“Some people think if it is not going to change the world it is terrible, but we need incremental change too in order to build momentum for new economic models to emerge.”**

Kevin Bayuk, Lift Economy

**No matter whether you decide to attempt a radical shift or to take an incremental approach:** an essential first step towards alternative ways of doing business is to build individual and organizational awareness of how your current business operations impact, and potentially damage, society and the environment.

Collective awareness is a first step to collective learning, no one will be able to complete this transition alone. **Once the value of taking an alternative path is recognised throughout the organisation, ideas and opportunities will emerge and more people will be willing to explore alternative ways of doing business.**

1. [medium.com/@designforsustainability/ecological-design-complexity-and-systemic-health-8acc3ba7d046](https://medium.com/@designforsustainability/ecological-design-complexity-and-systemic-health-8acc3ba7d046)  
 2. [medium.com/age-of-awareness/designing-regenerative-cultures-introduction-68a12a387983](https://medium.com/age-of-awareness/designing-regenerative-cultures-introduction-68a12a387983)  
 3. [www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/01/how-to-do-business-with-doughnuts/](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/01/how-to-do-business-with-doughnuts/)



# Art. 1

## Redefining success: from profit maximisation to purpose-driven

A clear vision for the future is key to redefining the way we do business today. If we want to become part of the solution, it is essential to create time and space to reflect on what kind of future we would like to contribute to. **How can we make the wellbeing of people and the environment an integral part of our business goals?**

**“We need to think beyond shareholder value and aim to improve people’s lives.”**

Marcos Leite, COO, OLX Brasil.

A business that will succeed is one that is able to make decisions that favour people and the planet where there might be a trade off with the goal of profit maximisation.

**Why does common business logic no longer serve us?**

The assumptions upon which the current economic system was built simply no longer hold true. Jean-Baptiste Say articulated in 1803 that ‘natural resources cannot be exhausted’, therefore they are ‘out of the scope of economic sciences’. Thomas Piketty in [his book ‘Capital’](#)<sup>1</sup> disproved the assumption that free market capitalism will ensure the returns from capital and labour stay balanced. **Under the current system the returns from capital will always exceed those from labour, which will inevitably lead to ever growing inequalities in economic life.**

**“The economic and monetary system is still driving the process: Our current system has an inbuilt growth imperative and structure drives behaviour. In all our good intentions to redesign things, we are not going deep enough. We need to be more radical if we want to make a difference.”**

Daniel Wahl, author of [‘Designing Regenerative Cultures’](#)<sup>2</sup>.



To compound all this, commercial law nowadays (in many jurisdictions) is not explicit in encouraging businesses to incorporate environmental and social impacts into their approach to business.

**So what can we do?**

Most businesses are gradually moving to improve employee wellbeing, manage supplier relationships, and address community concerns to secure their market position and retain their talent. While this has certain value, often the greatest impact lies in finding the hidden opportunity.

**How can an enterprise be the first to rethink its business model and industry to contribute to human and ecological wellbeing?**

The increasing importance of environmental and societal challenges affects consumer demand, producers’ costs and regulatory frameworks. Therefore redirecting our businesses’ products or services to serve society and the environment provides a significant business opportunity.

**“Until we picture wellbeing in different local contexts we will not know what it actually means.”**

Rehema Isa, Founder of Womenomics, South Africa.

## #Case Study

### Futuro Forestal: Redefining the forestry sector

Together with a number of local and international stakeholders and investors, Futuro Forestal developed the ‘[generation forest](#)’<sup>3</sup>, a combination of the dynamics of natural forests and reforestation. This combined approach allows the organisation to tackle climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide and ensuring biodiversity, as well as recovering soils and water sources. It also helps to create income earning opportunities for locals.

**“The natural forest in itself doesn’t have a viable business case, and political and financial entities lack the ability to create a system where environmental services are paid for.”** Andreas Eke, Director of Futuro Forestal.

Even though the company is largely driven by foreign impact investments, the business model ensures long-term profitability. Futuro Forestal aims to become a game changer in the forestry sector:

**“Generation Forest is a concept, not a product. We need others to use it, so we can be on time with climate change. Our work is a small drop into the ocean and we have to be successful with what we are doing, so others copy what we do.”** Andreas Eke

Faced with alarming climate change data, Futuro Forestal is in the process of expanding its approach through land ownership in addition to forest management and the provision of environmental services.

What does success mean at Futuro Forestal?

**“The biggest success moment for me was when the jaguars came back to an area where we had reforested; an area that had been a cattle field 5 years ago. That was a moment of plain fulfillment.”** Andreas Eke

--  
Futuro Forestal<sup>4</sup> started off as a small family retail forestry company that has, over the last 25 years, become one of Latin America’s largest and premier providers of tropical hardwood, and worked on the reforestation of over 9000 hectares, the creation of 4,500 hectares of private reserves and has received both the FSC<sup>5</sup> and B-Corp<sup>6</sup> certifications.

1. [www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2014/05/04/thomas-piketys-capital-summarised-in-four-paragraphs](http://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2014/05/04/thomas-piketys-capital-summarised-in-four-paragraphs)  
2. [www.triarchypress.net/drc.html](http://www.triarchypress.net/drc.html)  
3. [futuroforestal.com/#section-forest](http://futuroforestal.com/#section-forest)  
4. [futuroforestal.com/](http://futuroforestal.com/)  
5. [fsc.org/en](http://fsc.org/en)  
6. [bcorporation.net/](http://bcorporation.net/)

# Art. 2

## The paradox of ownership and governance

No founder will ever forget the day their business legally came to life. Many business owners feel a great deal of emotional attachment to their creation as it unfolds, develops and grows.

Ownership and governance play a crucial role in business in a transition towards a wellbeing economy. Holding on to what is most important can require reimagining what it means to own something. Here are 3 important elements to consider:

- Decision making
- Growing pains
- Social and environmental concerns

### How can ownership support effective decision making?

Recent research has shown that [more than two thirds of employees](#)<sup>1</sup> are not fully engaged in their work, which affects their motivation, their commitment and also their [productivity](#)<sup>2</sup>.

**“Collaborative endeavours will be more effective if people affected by decisions are involved in making them, or at least that they are able to influence decisions that affect them, on the basis of sound reasons for doing so.”**

James Priest, Co-developer of Sociocracy 3.0, [LearnS3](#)<sup>3</sup>.

According to a [recent McKinsey survey](#)<sup>4</sup>, we spend about 37% of our work time on decision making. But decisions made in the absence of an understanding of the full picture, can affect the company's or team's ability to respond to a changing environment.

In common ownership structures, influence and business information are mostly centralised to a few decision-makers. As a result, employees, customers, the communities involved and the environment are often left out of decision-making processes.

**“Management hierarchies centralise decision making. While this is effective in some contexts, when navigating complexity, collaborative endeavours are more likely to succeed if you shift responsibility for significant elements of decision making close to where value is created.”**

James Priest, Co-developer of Sociocracy 3.0, [LearnS3](#).

Ultimately, ownership shouldn't prevent productivity - it should enable it by delegating governance to those concerned.

### How can ownership affect trajectory?

Many companies were started in response to a social need - sometimes influenced by their founders' religious beliefs. The UK confectionery company Cadbury's was begun by a Quaker, the Spanish cooperative Mondragon by a Catholic priest, and the UK retailer Marks and Spencer by an impoverished Jewish boy from Belarus. These organizations, like many others, have struggled through organisational growth and change of ownership to stay true to their initial purpose.

An ownership and governance structure that supports key stakeholders by involving them in decision-making can help organisations to stay true to their missions.



**“Investor demands on business can take away from a business' original mission. Without ownership and governance models designed to protect the interests of all stakeholders, there is a risk that actions focusing on the short-term will prevail.”**

Katherine Trebeck, Author - The Economics of Arrival.

As companies grow, they often start to be viewed as commodities, controllable by the highest bidder. Common governance models are designed principally to maximize shareholder value and often ignore other stakeholder interests.

**“Listed companies are in effect owned by nobody, because everybody does. The result is a lack of responsibility.”**

Martin Rich, Future Fit.

This means short-term profit gains can often overrule organisational values and principles, social and environmental concerns and even the long-term success of the business. Even Patagonia, often held up as the poster child for sustainability, is wrestling with these questions as they pass \$1bn in annual sales and [begin to question](#)<sup>5</sup> whether their scale is a hindrance to being truly regenerative.

**“Scale is a real problem for change.”**

Hunter Lovins, President, Natural Capitalism Solutions

As a business grows and occupies a new role in the market, there is a need to evolve toward a model of [stewardship](#)<sup>6</sup>, where influence is delegated to a range of stakeholders to ensure informed decisions can be made by those affected.

### Who's responsible for social and environmental concerns?

Traditionally, considering social and environmental topics has always been an afterthought for businesses. Lately, that has begun to change with [statements from various business groups](#)<sup>7</sup> to the effect that profit maximisation will no longer be the sole focus of their business.

However, saying it and actually doing it are two very different things. One way to help ensure we move from words to action is by bringing other voices into the governance model. Check out our first case study, Riversimple, for one such example. Another way to do this is through employee ownership, a model discussed in our second case study, that of Auchrannie Resort.

1. [www.gallup.de/183833/state-the-global-workplace.aspx](#)  
2. [www.gallup.com/workplace/236366/right-culture-not-employee-satisfaction.aspx](#)  
3. [www.learns3.org](#)  
4. [www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/decision-making-in-the-age-of-urgency](#)  
5. [medium.com/activate-the-future/can-regenerative-economics-mainstream-business-mix-ef2f8aafa8d4](#)  
6. [purpose-economy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Purpose\\_Steward\\_Ownership\\_Rethinking\\_Ownership-in-the-21st-Century.pdf](#)  
7. [www.businessroundtable.org/business-roundtable-redefines-the-purpose-of-a-corporation-to-promote-an-economy-that-serves-all-americans](#)



# #Case Study

## Riversimple: Redesigning ownership

Riversimple<sup>1</sup> is a car manufacturer that has taken value creation to a completely different level. The business was founded to address the enormous environmental damage created by personal vehicles, with the purpose: ‘To pursue, systematically, the elimination of the environmental impact of personal transport’. The founders recognised that they serve not only investors but a total of 6 different stakeholder groups: The Environment, Customers, Communities, Staff, Investors and Commercial Partners.

“We believe that it is possible to design a business model that aligns the interests of the business with those of people and the planet. The mindset of the business has to be aligned in order to implement such a model.” Hugo Spowers, Chief Engineer and Founder of Riversimple

As Buckminster Fuller said, “you never change things by fighting the existing reality; you change things by making a better model that makes the existing model obsolete”. Therefore the intention is to make more money from doing the right thing.

“If a business is designed to maximise financial return, delivering environmental and social return as well is inevitably a cost on the bottom line and competes with the financial return. However, if a business is designed to deliver environmental and social return as well as financial, it enhances rather than competes with financial return.” Hugo Spowers

The company did decide not only to include the above mentioned stakeholder groupss in its governance model, but also to make them the key decision makers in the ownership structure. The aspiration was to establish a business model with the capacity to ‘see’ in all directions and then ‘deliver’, even in the face of complex challenges.

“The original intention was to serve the ‘basket of interests’ so often referred to by economists. However, the interests of investors are not well correlated with the interests of society and the planet, embedding the Purpose structurally in the governance of the company.” Hugo Spowers

With that in mind, six ‘custodians’ (stakeholder groups) were put in place by Riversimple. Each forming a separate and independent legal entity.

“Shareholder value has primacy in UK law, so we felt that the simplest way to deliver that without a conflict of interests was to make the Environment and other key stakeholder groups shareholders.” Hugo Spowers

A Stewards Board ultimately ensures that the board abides by its fiduciary responsibility, ‘To balance and protect the benefit streams’ of each of these stakeholders.

“The Board’s duty is to pursue the Purpose while balancing and protecting the benefit streams of all six stakeholder groups, rather than maximising the value of one. It is essentially a partnership model and you cannot have a partnership in which one partner has control, because then it’s not a partnership.” Hugo Spowers

While governance is distributed, money flows in a similar way to any other business:

“Dividends still go to the equity holders but that does not mean that control all goes to the equity holders. Equity and control are decoupled and addressed separately - ownership of all the equity does not mean control of all the business.” Hugo Spowers

This ownership model has particularly shown its value in difficult moments, where the solution to balance all interests was not obvious.

“Having stakeholders actively interested and involved in the business means that we have the benefit of their wisdom and perspective and they hold us to our Purpose, which is fundamentally dedicated to the wellbeing of society and the planet.” Hugo Spowers

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Riversimple has developed a unique business model that aims to completely rethink the automobile sector, from open-source design to a circular economy approach to car use, with the goal of minimising environmental impact deeply rooted in the organisational backbone.

# #Case Study

## Auchrannie Resort: Stepping into employee ownership

At the end of 2017, [Auchrannie Resort](#)<sup>2</sup> on the island of Arran in Scotland became the first Scottish resort to transition to a model of employee ownership. A trust now owns 100% of the company’s shares on behalf of its 160 employees.

Linda Johnston, the resort’s co-founder and managing director, said of the employees in relation to the transfer:

“They realise that what each of them does will affect the future success of the business and that this is directly linked to their own success, so they have already become more engaged in making the business better and understand the power and influence each and every one of them now has on their own future.”

New efficiency targets for the business, agreed upon by the ‘new owners’, created the conditions to become a Real Living Wage Accredited Employer in April of 2018. While the efficiency targets helped boost profitability, paving the way for the introduction of the Real Living Wage, there was also a recognition that the introduction of the wage would in and of itself support further financial benefits. These included lower staff recruitment costs (due to higher retention), greater productivity and increased occupancy from an improved reputation.

“Employee ownership will give the whole Auchrannie team a stake in the continued growth of the business. All of us will work together to build a more efficient, sustainable and profitable business.

We are confident that the collective efforts of our fantastic team will continue to strengthen Auchrannie’s customer care and community focus as well as improving the sustainability of the business going forward.” Linda Johnston, MD and former owner of the resort

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Since the acquisition of a 16-room guest house in 1988 by Linda and her late husband Iain, the resort has become home to two 4-star hotels, 30 5-star self-catering lodges, 14 luxury ‘Retreats’, two leisure clubs, 3 restaurants, a children’s playbarn, a destination spa and an outdoor adventure company. The ownership transfer was born of a desire for an exit strategy by the Johnston family (sole owners of the resort) that would allow the business to continue to flourish as well as upholding the ethos of the company, maintaining and motivating the team plus continuing the local community’s access to the facilities of the resort.

Crucially, the transfer arrangements were designed to make it affordable to the business to be able to both reinvest in the future and financially reward the employees after the transfer. The previous shareholders will be paid out of the profits of the business over the next 25 years.

1. [www.riversimple.com](http://www.riversimple.com)  
2. [www.auchrannie.co.uk/](http://www.auchrannie.co.uk/)

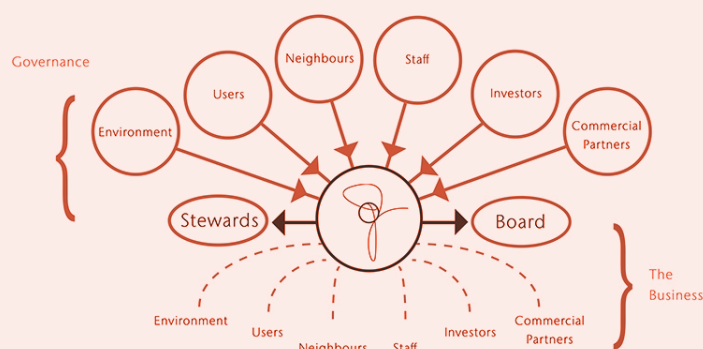
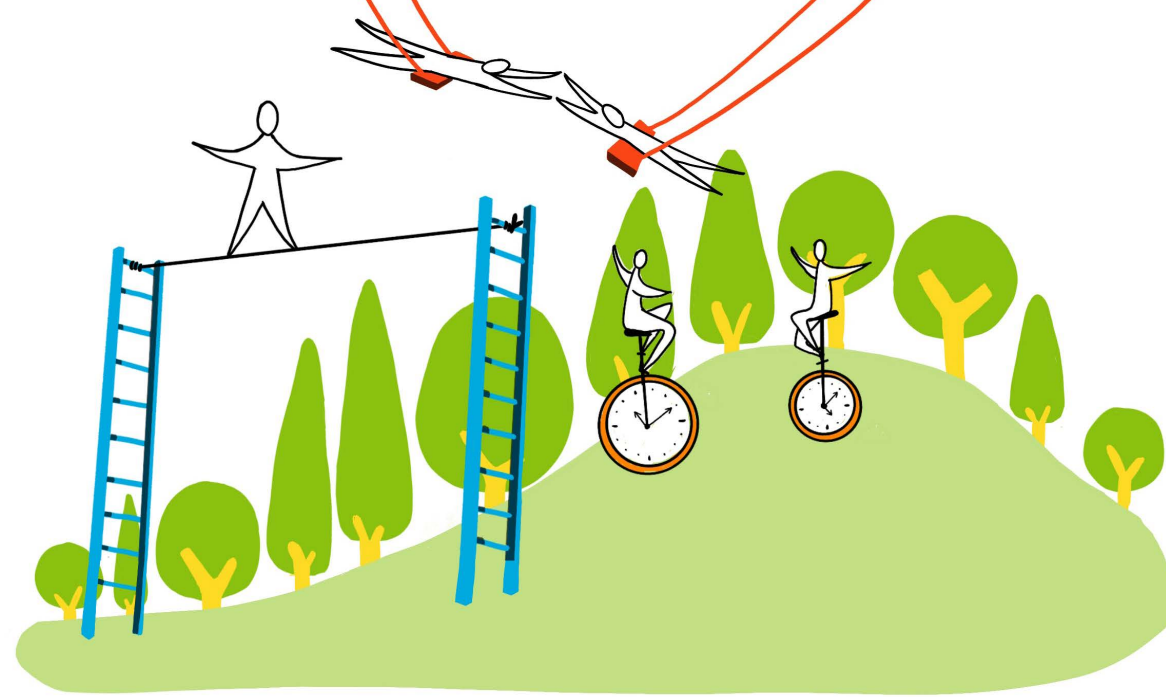


Image: Riversimple Governance Model ([www.riversimple.com](http://www.riversimple.com))





## Art. 3 Embracing participatory leadership

**Nobody is born a perfect leader or entrepreneur.** Being good at either means being able to take a risk. Distributing leadership might be perceived as a risk at first, but it is necessary when we want a business to flourish.

The idea of participatory leadership often creates fear in decision-makers. Won't this all become a big mess?

**“Decentralize as much as possible, and retain as much influence as necessary.”**

Lili David, Co-Developer at Sociocracy 3.0.

Skilled leadership comes through an awareness of yourself as well as your changing external conditions. Understanding how the two combine is critical to knowing how one's leadership can best serve the business.

**We have identified two key features of leadership and participation in a business that can flourish in a wellbeing economy:**

### 1. Trust as a balancing act

According to a [recent four-year study on team effectiveness](#)<sup>1</sup> carried out by Google, psychological safety (being able to show one's self without fear of negative consequences) was identified as the single most important dynamic of effective teams. The research also revealed that sales teams with high ratings for psychological safety actually brought in more revenue.

**A climate of openness with the possibility of admitting errors and speaking about them openly is one of the key factors that Harvard Business School Professor Amy Edmondson confirms to be crucial for psychological safety.**

**“When we don't experience trust, as when we don't experience safety, we shut down, protect, and hide our vulnerability. We also, in both cases, tend to place responsibility for our experience on the outside.”**

Miki Kashtan, author and international CNVC trainer.

Leaders can support a sense of safety by framing challenges as open learning questions that require everybody's input.

**“We need people who challenge the status quo, and openness in the management team to be challenged.”**

Marcos Leite, EVP & Chief Commercial Officer at OLX Brazil

### 2. Feeling good whatever your level of control

**We like to feel in control and often delegating responsibility is a big challenge for leaders.**

Sometimes, this is because of a lack of knowledge and maturity in the team. Sometimes it's because the leader struggles to relinquish control.

How can one provide the minimum amount of necessary structure to allow the maximum amount of autonomy in a team, and the best value to customers, whilst making the leader feel good about sharing control?

**“To move towards wellbeing economy you need to give up power, are the decision makers ready to do it?”**

Erinch Sahan, Chief Executive at World Fair Trade Organization

Sharing power - a much better way to think of it than 'giving up' power - can be one of the best things a leader can do for the organisation. The benefits of effective delegation of responsibilities can be many: Firstly, delegating decision making creates a broader accountability base within the business. Secondly, decisions can be more effective as they no longer just rely on one person's gut. Decisions can be made by those closer to the effects of those decisions.

**“When we don't experience trust, as when we don't experience safety, we shut down, protect, and hide our vulnerability. We also, in both cases, tend to place responsibility for our experience on the outside.”**

Marcos Leite, COO, OLX Brasil.

**Activating collective intelligence throughout the system**

Sharing control can liberate a leader to provide guidance and strengthen the capabilities of the team. It can allow them to play the role of coach and mentor in areas they once took charge of themselves.

**Leaders want to spend the time they have available to create most value, and often they create value by serving as motivational leaders, inviting in clarity and structure where it is needed and creating a culture of learning and innovation.**

**“We need to support founders with the elements they struggle with the most, so that they can focus on what they are good at and where they can create impact.”**

James Vaccaro, Special Advisor at Triodos Bank.

# #Case Study

## Lancor: Leading from the bottom up

Lancor<sup>2</sup> is a cooperative with 89 employees and 76 years of history. The company started off as a family business and is now specialised in the production of elevation machinery and wind generators, with a large additional portfolio of innovation and development projects.

In 2005, when the business was in a moment of crisis, Koldo Saratxaga from NER Group<sup>3</sup> met with Lancor and offered a transition towards a model of self-organisation. In a leap of faith the employees almost unanimously decided to embrace the NER group's model. In 2013 the cooperative Lancor 2000 S.COOP was founded.

This was a radical change for the organisation. The team had experienced much tension and mistrust in the past: managers had committed to a workload that workers didn't feel was realistic. The change was challenging for former leaders who had held their positions for many years. It was also challenging for the workers, as they suddenly had to coordinate work themselves in their teams.

**“Most of us who coordinate have started in the workshop, like me. We got the opportunity from our coworkers to be coordinators.”**

Javier Dosuna, General Coordinator at Lancor

Today, Lancor has worked for over 10 years with a 99.5% on-time delivery rate, something that few manufacturing companies ever achieve. When the cooperative started its transformation, the business was dependent on four clients, a situation that created a great risk for the business. Today the team has managed to widen the client and product portfolios.

**“We have won the trust of people through absolute and total transparency. Every month we meet and all information is shared with relation to finance, client situation etc. and we make decisions around investments where everyone can contribute and is represented.”**

Javier Dosuna

From a 450k€ loss in 2005, the company became profitable in 2006 and generated a €1M profit in 2018 (with a turnover of around €20M) with almost the same number of employees.

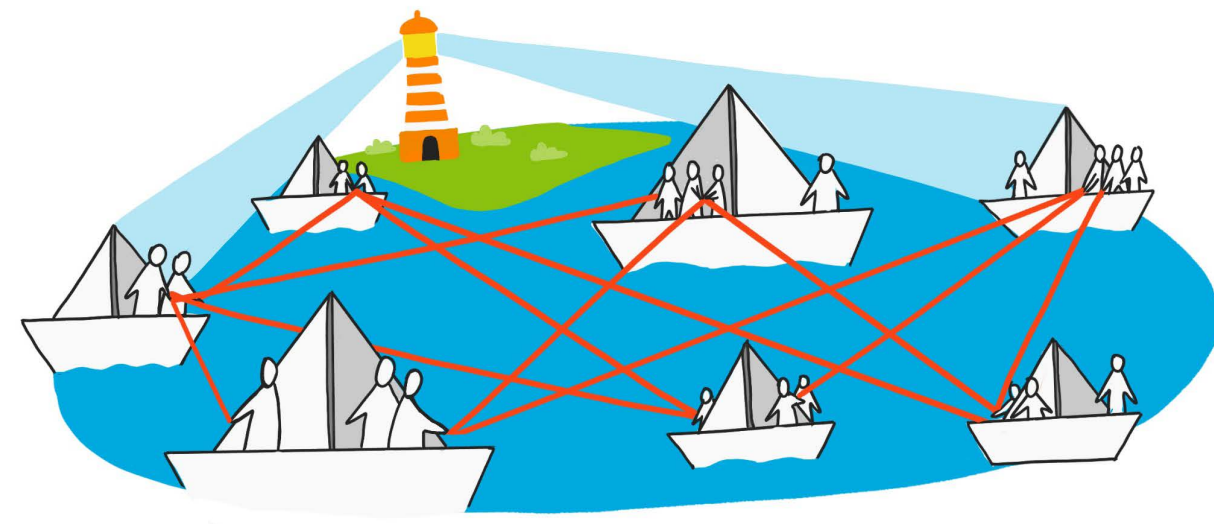
**“The NER Group model is flexible but never the same, so we have adapted it to our needs. We are what leaders want to be and work as a combined entity that makes decisions about its development.”** Javier Dosuna

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NER Group is an association in which diverse organisations, united by a shared organisational model, approach and culture that fosters self-organization. The group represents nearly 2,700 employees with an annual turnover of approximately €400 million.

1. [www.thinkwithgoogle.com/intl/en-gb/marketing-resources/content-marketing/five-dynamics-effective-team/](http://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/intl/en-gb/marketing-resources/content-marketing/five-dynamics-effective-team/)  
2. [www.lancor.es/en-us/](http://www.lancor.es/en-us/)  
3. [www.nergroup.org/en-us/](http://www.nergroup.org/en-us/)





Art. 4

# The unseen potential of the community

**“If people feel they cannot be seen by anyone else it brings out the worst in them. If they feel part of a community, this brings out the best in them.”**

James Vaccaro, Special Advisor at Triodos Bank.

**In business, the value of stakeholder engagement is often not fully appreciated.** The results of such engagement usually only become visible in the mid to long term. When we consider social and environmental impact as part of business, we need the long-term support of our stakeholders.

Recognizing the role one plays in the wider system and in the industry can make any change much more powerful. There are three levels in which we see the community play an essential role in supporting business in the wellbeing economy:

## Genuine and balanced supplier relationships

Suppliers form one of the three most pivotal relationships a business has to cultivate alongside customers and colleagues. Yet how often does it think of them as part of its community? How balanced are the relationships businesses have with them?

It might be the case that a business's suppliers are larger and more powerful than they are, or vice versa. Regardless of which way around it is, genuine and balanced relationships can be cultivated if businesses go beyond mere compliance and into a deeper relationship of shared values.

Building relationships with suppliers around a shared purpose and with similar values can increase reliability and simplify collaboration.

As economic systems begin to transform, businesses will be best placed to succeed by treating suppliers as a vital part of their community.

**“Ultimately the boundaries around organisations will become less fluid. What we will see will resemble an organizational ecosystem rather than large organizations.”**

Daniel Christian Wahl, author.

## Finding your place in the community

Businesses often choose to locate their offices and sites based on accessibility, tax rates and employee wages. **But how much do they consider their relationships with the communities they are a part of?**

**Business can be a catalyst for exchanging knowledge and collaborating at the local and regional levels, as well as generating value in their location and beyond.** Through working with other local stakeholders early on, a business will find how it can contribute to supporting a vibrant local area.

**“We need to define and design together what wellbeing means in each organization and local context.”**

Rehema Isa, Womanomics.

Depending on local conditions a business' contribution could look different, for example: ensuring that employees get safely to their workplace and back home during a night shift or supporting local governments with education around waste management and recycling.

## Recognising your role in the wider system

Being a pioneer is not easy, but if we want to achieve change in our sector, we need the ability to recognize the potential that comes with forging a new path.

Whether one works in the chocolate industry, banking, hospitality or reforestation, hearing how challenges were experienced and solved by other leaders can provide inspiration. Understanding what made a difference gives us the courage to take up the challenge of rethinking business as usual.

**“We at Triodos are an important drop in the ocean, but we remain a drop in the ocean. Only if we recognize our place within the wider systemic spectrum can we really have an impact.”**

James Vaccaro, Special Advisor at Triodos Bank.

Many organisations that provide support to businesses have recognized the importance of communities of practice. Organisations like the [Impact Hub](#)<sup>1</sup> have based their business model on the value they provide through an active community of support.

That's why communities of practice provide great support to leaders and changemakers:

**“We see ourselves as a provider of credit and capital. However we also provide value in being at the centre of a community and therefore play an important social function.”**

James Vaccaro, Special Advisor at Triodos Bank.

# #Case Study

## Maroma: Embedded in the community

**Maroma**<sup>1</sup> was founded in the late 1970s by Paul Pinthon and Laura Reddy and is now a multi-million dollar business with over 80 staff. This Indian business sells home fragrance and body care products: incense, candles, aromatic essence, reed diffusers, room fresheners, gift sets, potpourri, fragranced mats, perfume spirals and perfumed sachets.

**The Auroville**<sup>2</sup> community owns all shares in Maroma. While the CEOs of Maroma are founders and follow the charter of Auroville, along with the other business owned by the community, Maroma's employees have the autonomy to run and manage the business.

Maroma's profits are its contribution to the Auroville Foundation. These funds serve to finance and create infrastructure assets in the sector of road building, water and sanitation, power (including from alternate sources such as solar, wind and biomass), as well as telecommunication and housing for Auroville residents.

**“Maroma is a quintessential example of an enterprise fully embedded in its community. It has a governance and business model that locks in its social mission. After 40 years of serving its community, Maroma demonstrates the resilience of the Fair Trade Enterprise model. It shows that business can be designed to put people and planet ahead of growing its own profits.”** Erinch Sahan, CEO, World Fair Trade Organisation

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Maroma aims to achieve a balanced relationship with its suppliers by selecting suppliers that are able to offer products that match product specifications and also allowing them to set their own prices. If suppliers get into economic difficulties, Maroma looks to support them to move through those difficult times.

Maroma is verified by the [World Fair Trade Organisation](#)<sup>3</sup> as a social enterprise that fully practices Fair Trade. This means they are structured as a mission-led enterprise and implement the 10 Fair Trade Principles in all their operations and supply chains.

1. [www.impacthub.net](#)  
2. [www.auroville.org/](#)  
3. [wfto.com/podcast/maroma-fair-trade-enterprise-cares](#)

## Art. 5

# Products and services for people and the planet

Currently, about **2.01 billion metric tons<sup>1</sup>** of waste are produced annually worldwide and only a fraction of that is recycled or composted. The World Bank estimates overall waste generation will increase by **70% by 2050<sup>2</sup>**. In a world full of waste, what products and services does the world truly need?

**“Business should ultimately aim to give people jobs for them to improve their lives and to produce products and services that improve the world.”**

Dave Weatherhead, Managing Director of Kinesys.

New York University **Center for Sustainable Business (CSB)<sup>3</sup>** has identified a growing consumer demand for sustainability-marketed products, however these currently account for under 17% of the current market. The question is: does sustainability as we understand it enhance the world?

**“I ask myself occasionally if the word sustainability is the right word to use. If sustainability is just maintenance, perhaps we can go beyond it. Is being less bad being good?”**

William McDonough, co-author of **Cradle-to-Cradle<sup>4</sup>**.

### Designing products and services that last

Reduce, reuse, recycle. We are all now familiar with this slogan. However, it is still only recycling that has really taken off.

**“I see design as a signal of human intention. We need to stop designing things for end-of-life, designing for next use is just a different way of thinking.”**

William McDonough, co-author of Cradle-to-Cradle.



The problem is that if we design products that go to waste after a certain lifespan, even if we recycle, the raw material loses value. There is energy lost along the product lifespan, throughout research and development, production, transport, maintenance and the recycling process. Some industries design their products to break after a certain period of time so they can be replaced by a new (possibly improved) version - so called “planned obsolescence”.



Image: Ellen MacArthur Foundation infographic

The above image presents three principles of a circular approach to product design. Waste and pollution are largely a product of the current design process and so can be designed out. Keeping products in use is all about reusing, repairing and remanufacturing. Regenerating natural systems means making sure that every product at the end of its life can be an input for another product.

### Creating space for learning and innovation

Traditional innovation processes tend to leave out the bigger ecosystem picture and focus on satisfying consumer demands. There is a need to map raw material flows, energy use and stakeholders in order to develop a balanced approach that creates value for all that are involved.

**“The current linear economy is following a cradle-to-grave model, we are looking at eliminating the concept of waste using biological and technical nutrients.”**

William McDonough, co-author of Cradle-to-Cradle.

Whether you apply human-centred design, **design thinking<sup>5</sup>**, **biomimicry<sup>6</sup>** or **circular design<sup>7</sup>** processes, a circular design approach includes ecosystem awareness in every step of the product and service innovation process.

### Offering services rather than products

One way to radically reduce material use is to move from offering to sell a product to offering that product as a service. Offering products as a service is a model which returns the ownership and responsibility of the product back into the hands of the producer. Selling a product as a service makes energy efficiency and sustainability profitable, because it makes cutting costs through designing for disassembly and resource recovery attractive. Hence, modular design becomes the default for designers, making extending the life of the product attractive.

A good example of this approach is Philips' selling of light as a service rather than lighting units as a product. With a 5-year service agreement to supply lighting in **Schiphol airport<sup>8</sup>**, designing lighting units to be easily repairable makes financial sense for Philips and reduces the price to the client.

**Riversimple<sup>9</sup>**, a company featured in another case study in this guide, include all elements of car ownership in their service offer - the vehicle, repair, insurance - and also the (hydrogen) fuel. This allows them to exercise their greater buying power to keep down (hydrogen) fuel costs.

### Moving towards a circular economy

As we move towards a circular economy, we start seeing more opportunities in stakeholder collaboration. Now, organisations like **Circle Economy<sup>10</sup>** find that a neighbourhood community can benefit from the heat created during the manufacturing process of a nearby factory.

Sharing platforms can facilitate the exchange and reuse of goods and we can benefit from open design processes that involve citizens in solving local challenges **e.g. OpenIdeo<sup>11</sup>**.

A circular economy system is one where collaboration prevails and where there is less of a need for patents and idea ownership. Examples here are **Tesla<sup>12</sup>** and Riversimple. The real value is created through expertise, mutual benefit and collaboration. You can learn more about the circular economy here: [www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/](http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/)

1. [www.wastedive.com/news/world-bank-global-waste-generation-2050/533031/](http://www.wastedive.com/news/world-bank-global-waste-generation-2050/533031/)  
2. [www.wastedive.com/news/world-bank-global-waste-generation-2050/533031/](http://www.wastedive.com/news/world-bank-global-waste-generation-2050/533031/)  
3. [fortune.com/2019/11/05/sustainability-marketing-consumer-spending/](http://fortune.com/2019/11/05/sustainability-marketing-consumer-spending/)  
4. [www.amazon.com/Cradle-Remaking-Way-Make-Things/dp/0865475873](http://www.amazon.com/Cradle-Remaking-Way-Make-Things/dp/0865475873)  
5. [www.circulardesignguide.com/](http://www.circulardesignguide.com/)  
6. [biomimicry.net/](http://biomimicry.net/)  
7. [www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/explore/circular-design](http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/explore/circular-design)  
8. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=11r0NYfiZk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11r0NYfiZk)  
9. [www.riversimple.com/](http://www.riversimple.com/)  
10. [www.circle-economy.com/](http://www.circle-economy.com/)  
11. [www.openideo.com](http://www.openideo.com)  
12. [www.tesla.com/blog/all-our-patent-are-belong-you](http://www.tesla.com/blog/all-our-patent-are-belong-you)



# #Case Study

## Unusual Rigging: Prolonging life

Unusual Rigging (Unusual) is a provider of rigging and stage engineering solutions. For the past five years, they have been on a journey to embed Embedding the principles of the circular economy in the business.

Historically, Unusual has employed a rental system for its products which has been efficient at managing material loops. As the company strives to transition towards a fully circular business model, its new goal is to become effective at closing material loops.

In short, the company is striving to:

- Prolong the life of their products
- Design their products for disassembly and resource recovery
- Offer products as a service

A key innovation that is helping them to achieve these goals is their asset tracking software system. This system, first introduced in 2014 for their own products (and in 2016 for those of their clients), provides Unusual with the ability to conduct predictive maintenance and gives each product a material passport.

No longer viewing their products as having a limited lifespan means Unusual are able to design and offer them as a service. This has resulted in more than 50 tonnes of steel being reused during the course of a year, saving thousands of tonnes of CO2 emissions.

In terms of closing their own energy needs loop, the company has installed solar panels at their principal site.

An important additional step Unusual are taking is to share the story of their journey of working collaboratively with their community of suppliers and customers to bring the circular economy to their industry. Through collaboration and sharing they are demystifying innovations in the circular economy and showing that it is not just achievable but optimal for medium size businesses to also embark on that journey.

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Established in 1983, [Unusual Rigging](#)<sup>1</sup> is the UK's most experienced provider of rigging and stage engineering solutions, working across Europe, principally in the entertainment, special events, exhibitions and presentations industries.

“We would define [the circular economy] as an economy ‘where objects never die’ – we are dealing predominantly with ‘technical nutrients’ – finite stock that through digital innovations can continuously be tracked, assessed, utilised and returned with an almost zero marginal loss in value.”

Tom Harper, Director and Head of Circular Economy, Unusual Rigging.

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1. [www.unusual.co.uk/index.php](http://www.unusual.co.uk/index.php)



# Art. 6

## Accounting for impact & ROI

If we want to contribute to value creation, health, safety, ecosystem survival and human wellbeing, it is important to include them as metrics in our balance sheet.

**“The more you outsource externalities, the better you do financially in today’s system. If companies outsource all harm you never have to account/pay for it.”**

Martin Rich, Co-Founder and Executive Director at Future Fit.

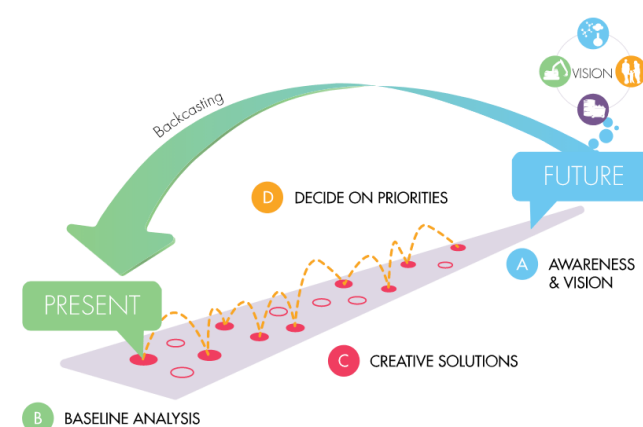
We need to consider our own operations and also the full supply chain and product life cycle. Only this way can we measure performance indicators in a similar way to financial performance. However, can we ever compare the value of a tree to the value of a mother in monetary terms?

**“People want to measure everything but it is not always healthy. You can hit the target but miss the point.”**

James Vaccaro, Special Advisor at Triodos Bank.

Rather than blindly tracking our performance towards a framework like the [Sustainable Development Goals](#)<sup>1</sup>, we need a clear idea of the future scenario we want to create as part of our business purpose, a plan on the business’ contribution to this scenario and clear performance indicators on how to get there.

We need a clear understanding of a desired future scenario that is easy to communicate. This provides us with a shared starting point so we can effectively work together on the desirable change. Frameworks like the [Natural Step](#)<sup>2</sup> can help us develop such scenarios.



[Image here: Natural Step Framework](#)

We then need a bold set of processes, tools and practices that help us facilitate action and a clear set of performance indicators that we can measure success on.

There is always the temptation to take off the shelf (ready-made) indicator sets, both for ease as well as comparison with other organisations. However, we would suggest first asking yourself the question: Do these indicators accurately reflect the change that your business wants to achieve? Much time and energy is wasted collecting lots of data for tick box activities as opposed to measuring whether the change (those activities were designed to achieve) has actually happened.



It is not the amount of training provided but what people do with that training that matters. Measuring impact should not be different from measuring key performance indicators (KPIs). A forward-looking set of KPIs should instead be the impact you want to achieve.

In recent years, alternative return on investment methodologies have emerged to assist businesses in bringing their social and environmental impact into the balance sheet. These can be useful, but only if their limitations (valuing nature, dubious discount rates) are recognised and the data is fed back in a format that enables people to take action. Measuring for measurement’s sake is just not worth it.

Often the story of how the impact is achieved (rather than the return on investment calculations of the impact) is the most useful information an organisation takes away from such an exercise.

**“We can only operate at environmental and social loss for so long, otherwise we will go bankrupt.”**

Martin Rich, Co-Founder and Executive Director at Future Fit.

Ultimately business needs to find ways to design wellbeing into their economic system and incentivise those actions that have the potential to substantially contribute to positive impact.

<sup>1</sup> [www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/)  
<sup>2</sup> [thenaturalstep.org](http://thenaturalstep.org)



# #Case Study

## Tony's Chocolonely: Raising the bar for slave-free chocolate



**Tony's Chocolonely**<sup>1</sup> was founded 13 years ago by journalist Teun van de Keuken. Teun was shocked to discover that much of the chocolate sold in supermarkets was made by people working in slave like conditions. When he tried to discuss the situation with chocolate makers, many declined to discuss the issue.

"Malpractices in the cacao industry drove me to set up Tony's. Many plantations in Western Africa practice slavery and child labour even today. That's what we want to help to prevent."

Teun van de Keuken, journalist and founder of Tony's Chocolonely

Being a journalist, Teun had investigated the number of children working on cocoa farms and how many were working under illegal and dangerous conditions. This was what motivated him to create Tony's.

From the outset, it was clear that a mission to eradicate modern slavery from all chocolate production went way beyond measuring Tony's direct impact.

"Alone we make slave-free chocolate, together we make all chocolate 100% slave-free. One of the main things we've learnt along the way is how difficult it is to change an industry. After 11 years we're not there yet. We're actively seeking partners who apply our model." Teun van de Keuken, Founder of Tony's Chocolonely

Tony's strategy roadmap to achieve the goal of 100% slave-free chocolate consists of three pillars:

It is these three pillars that form the measurable impact of Tony's Chocolonely. The company also follows the GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) guidelines for sustainable reporting as well as the usual financial accounting metrics. The metrics relating to their roadmap are their clear indicators of impact and success. In their 2018/19 annual report, this meant 13 key metrics linked to the three pillars.

The newest of these metrics is linked to the third pillar and is all about the start of **Tony's Open Chain**<sup>2</sup>, an open source platform where chocolate companies can access the necessary knowledge and tools to improve their supply chain.

"On its own, a certification label does not enable farmers to live above the poverty line and provide a decent income for their families. The way we see it, chocolate makers are responsible for their chocolate supply chain – not the certification inspector." Teun van de Keuken



Image: Tony's Chocolonely ([www.tonyschocolonely.com](http://www.tonyschocolonely.com))

Critically, Tony's recognises that it cannot do it all by itself and its business goal can only be achieved in collaboration with others. This it acknowledges in the way it reports its impact, highlighting the contribution of others.

In 2018/2019 Tony's Chocolonely expanded to 143 employees with a revenue of roughly 70 million euros. Over 53 million of this revenue came from the home market of the Netherlands, and the business is now looking into international expansion. Take a look at the latest [annual report here](https://www.tonyschocolonely.com/us/en/annual-fair-reports/annual-fair-report-18-19)<sup>3</sup> to find out more about the size and complexity of the problem, about what is going well for the business and what still needs to be improved.

1. [www.unusual.co.uk//index.php](http://www.unusual.co.uk//index.php)

2. [www.tonysopenchain.com/](http://www.tonysopenchain.com/)

3. [tonyschocolonely.com/us/en/annual-fair-reports/annual-fair-report-18-19](https://www.tonyschocolonely.com/us/en/annual-fair-reports/annual-fair-report-18-19)

Art. 7

# Learning together



“The future of our society, our economic growth in the future, the GDP growth of industrialized countries, is going to be dependent on the quality and character of our collective imagination.”

Eric Ries, author of The Lean Startup.

There is no single path to success. However, when looking at success cases and especially at less successful scenarios, there are a few stepping stones that we have identified as crucial elements to keep in mind.

What problem are we solving?

Any change starts with identifying the challenge, a definition of a status quo that needs ‘fixing’. Having a clear problem to solve is key and not always easy. It may require investigation, testing and learning. It is important though, because it becomes the reason others feel motivated to step in and contribute to a cause.

Such a definition may evolve and be refined over time. Spending time clarifying the ‘Why’ of a transformation process is key to navigating our way to a successful scenario.

Identifying small steps with high potential

The mantra “Think global and act local” is already widely known. It seems straightforward and then again is quite difficult to implement.

The truth is that in a complex world like the business environment, there is no single solution and even so-called best practices or success stories of others will not give us a direct answer on how to find our own way.

What we are looking for are small steps with the potential to create a wider impact. For example, a product that could potentially change the industry. A sweet spot for a service solution that is concrete enough to be implementable and radical enough to be able to fix a wider issue. An opportunity that creates benefit for all stakeholders and actors involved.

Inviting others in

Inviting others to join a change initiative needs to be done with care. If we impose a change on others, we will likely encounter resistance. If people get the chance to choose for themselves, they tend to show a wider sense of ownership and accountability for the outcome. It is crucial to be clear and transparent around the reason for the intended change, about expectations and constraints. Initial skepticism and doubts of others may be voiced. Rather than arguing these away, it may be useful to include and acknowledge these as useful input that could serve as a knowledge base and may help to evolve the initial plan of action.

Creating safe-to-fail environments:

“Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better.”

Samuel Beckett, author.

If we want to create value, time is a key factor. Spending lots of time without testing an assumption can lead to a waste of resources – raw materials or labour. This is why it is important that we check our assumptions early on and create maximum space for learning and adjusting our course.

“We accelerate that learning through something called the *build-measure-learn* feedback loop.”

Eric Ries, author of The Lean Startup.

This requires that we test and validate assumptions, or adjust our course at a stage where the full product or plan may not yet have been developed. [The Lean Startup](#)<sup>1</sup> approach invites entrepreneurs and decision makers to develop minimum viable products (MVPs) to do frequent testing. With this approach, failure becomes a way to increase learning, rather than something to avoid, and it allows space for adjusting the course early on and planning in shorter cycles. If implemented in the organization, this leads to a company-wide feedback loop of learning and discovery.

Practices like [Theory U](#)<sup>2</sup> offer space for collective initiation, sensing, creation and evolution of new solutions as they emerge. This ultimately changes the unit of progress from providing products and services to validated learning, where those people affected are included in the regular evaluation of the outcomes. This approach, coupled with moments of introspection, helps to unleash the individual and collective potential of learning and discovery in an organisation.

1. [www.theleanstartup.com](http://www.theleanstartup.com)  
2. [www.presencing.org](http://www.presencing.org)



## Cynefin

### Dealing with complexity

The Cynefin Framework (a Welsh word for habitat) is a model developed by Dave Snowden that can help us when we have to choose how to respond to a specific situation. The framework has emerged from data in a social process and contains four key dimensions that can help with sense-making and discovery. Each space requires a different way of thinking and course of action.

- Obvious situations have a causal relationship that is self-evident to any reasonable person. Best practices apply here and you can simply categorise the situation and respond accordingly.
- Complicated situations include a relationship between cause and effect that is not self-evident. There can be many ways to respond, that’s why best practices do not really exist, rather multiple good practices. The suggested course of action here is to sense, analyse the situation and respond. Often expertise is required to be able to apply good practices.
- Complex situations contain a system without causality. We are forced to create safe-to-fail experiments. If they fail we try another way to respond. Emerging practices will be discovered along the way.
- Chaos: One enters it deliberately for innovation. If caused unintentionally, one needs to move quickly to stabilize the situation. Any practice used here will be completely novel.

Unfortunately, one mostly resides in the central space (disorder), meaning not knowing what space one is in. One therefore often tends naturally to respond with a preferred course of action.

When running a change scenario in an existing business, you naturally finds yourself in a complex context. If the course fails, many people tend to see process failure as a reason for undesired results, while they simply might be applying strategies for a complicated or obvious scenario to a complex situation. More info about Cynefin here: [www.cognitive-edge.com/resources/](http://www.cognitive-edge.com/resources/)



# The Business of Wellbeing self-assessment

We have developed a short self-assessment for you to identify a starting point for your business' journey towards a wellbeing economy. Every path is different, so finding your business' areas of potential for development can be a valuable exercise.

## What to expect:

Rather than a standardised analysis, this tool allows you to map your own (subjective) view of the current situation with your desired scenario. By offering this perspective it may help you to gain a new perspective and new insights.

## 7 dimensions for The Business of Wellbeing:



### Redefining success:

Is the driving force of your business to serve people and the environment or is it to comply with consumer demands and regulations?



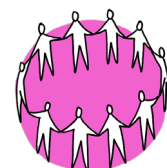
### Business ownership & governance:

Do we centralise governance to a few individuals or do we delegate decision making to those places where people are affected?



### Leadership & participation:

Who is driving the business, is this an individual or a collective effort?



### Community & stakeholder relationships:

Are the relationships between your business and stakeholders mutually beneficial or are they rather extractive?



### Product & service innovation:

Are our products and services designed in a way that offer the possibility for positive impact (regenerative), or are they simply designed to minimize negative impact and sustain the status quo (sustainable)?



### Accounting for impact & ROI:

How far do we translate our vision into concrete outcomes which are measured?

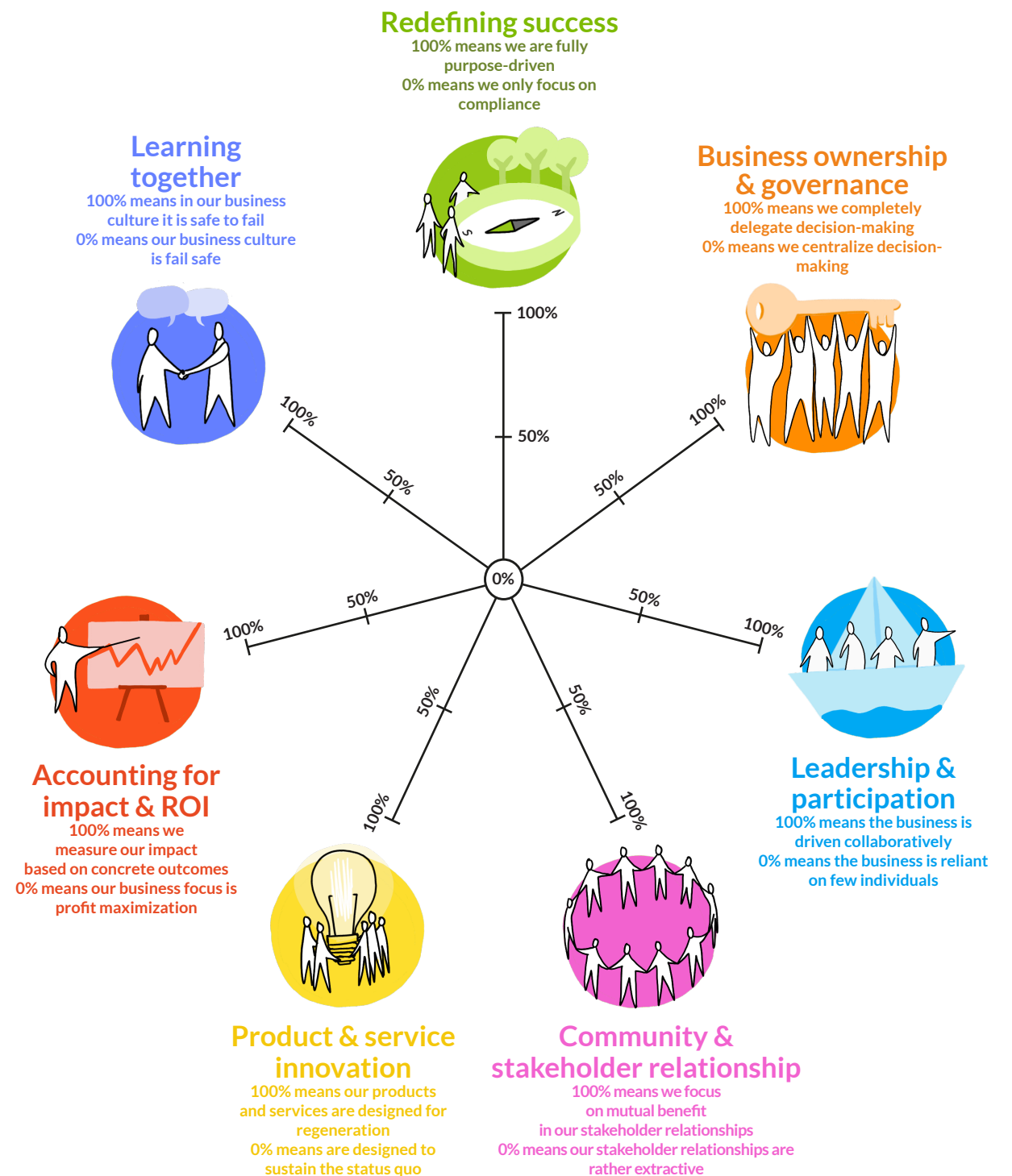


### Learning together:

Does the business foster a learning environment where failure is seen as an opportunity to learn?

# Self-assessment instructions:

Each dimension is represented with a line. Mark where you see your business right now with a cross for each line (the centre means 0% and the extremes stand for 100%). Then mark your desired/ideal scenario with a circle on the same line. Draw a line to connect the crosses and another one to connect the circles, to see a map of your current scenario vs. your ideal scenario (like a spiderweb).



## Working with the result:

Look at where your current scenario differs from the desired one: What simple steps could get you closer to the desired scenario for each dimension? What roadblocks are you currently facing and how could you overcome them? Your idea of your business might not be the same as others in your company. You can also ask colleagues to do the same assessment and then see where and why their perspectives differ from yours.

In the following section we provide an overview with possible solutions and organisations that can support you on your journey.

# A guide to possible solutions

There are many solutions out there. These are a selection of those we believe could be useful for you on your journey.

## Business ownership and governance:

- The Purpose Foundation
- The Employee Ownership Association
- The National Centre for Employee Ownership
- Fair shares

## Redefining success

- The Natural Step
- Future Fit
- r3.0.

## Leadership & participation

- Sociocracy 3.0.
- The Centre for Nonviolent Communication
- Art of Hosting

## Communities & stakeholder relationships

- The World Fair Trade Organisation
- BCorp
- The Platform Design Toolkit

## Product & service innovation

- The Ellen MacArthurFoundation
- Circle Economy
- The Biomimicry Institute
- Board of Innovation

## Accounting for impact & ROI

- B impact assessment
- Economy for the Common Good

## Learning together

- The Presencing
- Lean Startup
- Liberating Structures

## Redefining success

**The Natural Step** is a consultancy that provides a clear and simple definition of sustainability for everyone, creating a shared language so that we may work together for effective and desirable change. Learn more about the framework here: [www.thenaturalstep.org/approach/](http://www.thenaturalstep.org/approach/)

**Future Fit** supports leading companies in finding new ways to create value for themselves and society. The Future-Fit Business Benchmark can guide you on the journey. Learn more about the benchmark and how to apply it here: [www.futurefitbusiness.org/companies/](http://www.futurefitbusiness.org/companies/)

**r3.0** promotes business redesign for a thriving, regenerative and distributive economy and society. As a global not-for-profit platform, r3.0 crowdsources open recommendations for necessary transformations across diverse fields and sectors. Find out more about r3.0 here: [www.r3-0.org](http://www.r3-0.org)

## Business ownership and governance:

**The Purpose Foundation** supports a global community of businesses and entrepreneurs on their path towards steward-ownership through research, open-source resource development, hands-on support, and investment. Have a look at their resources about stewardship and ownership: [www.purpose-economy.org](http://www.purpose-economy.org)

**The Employee Ownership Association** is a UK-wide association for providing guidance, advice and support to those considering the transition to employee ownership. [www.employeeownership.co.uk](http://www.employeeownership.co.uk)

**The National Centre for Employee Ownership** (NCEO) is a nonprofit supporting the employee ownership community in the USA. Offering publications, educational networking events and the latest research on employee ownership and its impact. [www.nceo.org](http://www.nceo.org)

**Fair shares** is a brand and development model based on a multi-stakeholder approach for self-governing social enterprises operating as companies, co-operatives, partnerships and associations. [www.fairshares.coop](http://www.fairshares.coop)

## Leadership & participation

**Sociocracy 3.0** is a social technology that people can use to radically improve organisational development for individuals, teams and the organisation as a whole. Find out more here: [www.learnsociocracy30.org](http://www.learnsociocracy30.org)

**The Centre for Nonviolent Communication** is dedicated to sharing Nonviolent Communication (NVC) around the world. NVC is about developing compassion and empathy with ourselves and others. Find out more here: [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org)

**Art of Hosting / Participatory Leadership:** The Art of Hosting is an approach to leadership that scales up from the personal to the systemic using personal practice, dialogue, facilitation and the co-creation of innovation to address complex challenges. [www.artofhosting.org](http://www.artofhosting.org)

## Communities & stakeholder relationships

**The World Fair Trade Organisation** (WFTO) is the home of Fair Trade enterprises. It offers the WFTO Guarantee System (GS) which combines Fair Trade and social enterprise verification into one with an active community of support: [www.wfto.com](http://www.wfto.com)

**BCorp** - A community of businesses that have chosen a purpose-driven legal framework under which to operate their businesses. Find out more here: [www.corporation.net](http://www.corporation.net)

**The Platform Design Toolkit** can help create new business models for organisations. The toolkit creates an opportunity to create scalable collaboration agreements, powered by narratives, technologies, and shared language. Find out more about the toolkit here: <https://platformdesigntoolkit.com/toolkit/>

## Product & service innovation

**The Ellen MacArthurFoundation** works with business, government and academia to build a framework for an economy that is restorative and regenerative by design. You can resources related to circular economy and circular design here: [www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/](http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/)

**Circle Economy** is a social enterprise, organised as a cooperative. Circle Economy accelerates the transition to circularity through on-the-ground, action-focused development of practical and scalable solutions: [www.circle-economy.com](http://www.circle-economy.com)

**The Biomimicry Institute** empowers people to create nature-inspired solutions for a healthy planet. Biomimicry is a practice that learns from and mimics strategies found in nature in order to solve human design challenges. More info here: [www.biomimicry.org](http://www.biomimicry.org)

**Board of Innovation:** Board of Innovation is a business design & innovation strategy firm. They help to develop growth strategies and innovation capabilities. You can also find a lot of free innovation tools and hands-on resources here: <https://www.boardofinnovation.com/tools/>

## Accounting for impact & ROI

**B impact assessment** (BIA): A tool of the B Corps movement. This impact assessment tool supports a company in measuring its impact on its workers, community, environment, and customers. [www.bimpactassessment.net](http://www.bimpactassessment.net)

**Economy for the Common Good:** The Common Good Balance Sheet measures success by new standards: increasing the common good, not only financial gain, becomes the main goal. [www.ecogood.org/en/our-work/common-good-balance-sheet/common-good-matrix/](http://www.ecogood.org/en/our-work/common-good-balance-sheet/common-good-matrix/)

## Learning together

**The Presencing Institute** was founded in 2006 to create an action research platform at the intersection of science, consciousness, and profound social and organizational change. Today Theory U (from the Institute) is a change framework for cross-sector leadership, change and innovation initiatives worldwide with an innovation platform called u.lab: [www.presencing.org](http://www.presencing.org)

**Lean Startup** provides a scientific approach to creating and managing startups and get a desired product to customers' hands faster. It is a principled approach to developing a culture of learning and innovation in your business. You can read more about the principles and join local meetups near you here: [www.theleanstartup.com](http://www.theleanstartup.com)

**Liberating Structures** offers an alternative way to approach and design how people work together. It provides a menu of thirty-three patterns to replace or complement conventional practices that are quite simple and easy to learn and apply. Have a look and try them out: [www.liberatingstructures.com/lis/](http://www.liberatingstructures.com/lis/)



# The Business of Wellbeing

A Guide to  
the Alternatives  
to Business  
as Usual



[wellbeingeconomy.org](http://wellbeingeconomy.org)  
[info@wellbeingeconomy.org](mailto:info@wellbeingeconomy.org)  
[f Facebook.com/weallalliance](https://www.facebook.com/weallalliance)  
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