Purpose by W.

PRACTICAL GUIDE

PURPOSE & IMPACT

Purpose into practice.

Six steps to turn your mission into everyday decisions

> Most organizations have a purpose or mission statement. Far fewer use it. Purpose beyond profit is good for people and good for business, but only when it's built into how you work.Purpose earns its place when it changes what people do on an ordinary Tuesday: what gets funded, who gets hired, and what gets said no to. These six steps work for companies, charities and foundations alike.

1 Say it plainly

Test your purpose statement: Can a new hire repeat it in one breath? Does it say who you serve and what changes because you exist? If not, rewrite it with the people who do the work.

2 Connect it to strategy

Choose three to five priorities and show how each one serves your purpose. Be just as clear about the work you will pause or stop. A purpose that doesn't shape choices is only a slogan.

3 Turn it into behaviours

For each priority, name two or three things people will see leaders and teams doing. "We bring partners in early" is more useful than "collaboration."

4 Build it into decisions

Add one question to board papers, budgets and hiring: How does this move our purpose forward? Small, repeated prompts change habits faster than big launches.

5 Measure what matters

Track a handful of indicators that cover outcomes for the people you serve and the health of your own team. Report them alongside the financials, not after them.

6 Tell the stories

Share real examples of purpose in action at every staff meeting and board meeting. Stories teach people what good looks like, and they build the relationships that carry the work.

FIVE SIGNS PURPOSE IS WORKING

- [ ] People can explain how their job connects to it.
- [ ] It has led you to say no to something.
- [ ] Leaders refer to it when making hard calls.
- [ ] Your board asks about it, not only about the budget.
- [ ] Partners and funders describe you the way you describe yourself.

Need a hand with this?

I'm Wendy Mitchell, an independent strategy and leadership advisor. I help businesses, nonprofits and foundations across Canada put purpose to work.

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