

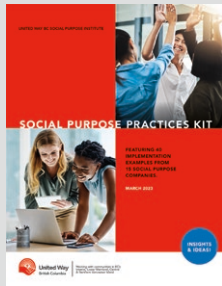
SOCIAL PURPOSE PRACTICE

Decision Lens

Make decisions that advance your social purpose



INSIGHTS & IDEAS!



SOCIAL PURPOSE PRACTICES KIT

This Purpose Practice is one of 11 Practices in the Social Purpose Practices Kit featuring 40 implementation examples from 15 social purpose companies. The Social Purpose Practices shown below are based on the [United Way BC Social Purpose Implementers program](#) and the experience of the companies who went through it.

Check out the complete [Social Purpose Practice Kit](#) to gain insights and ideas on how to meaningfully, authentically, and impactfully realize your social purpose ambition!

PLAN	EMBED	ENGAGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➔ Roadmap➔ CSR/ESG Transition➔ Product Transition➔ Process Metrics➔ Impact Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➔ Values➔ Decision Lens➔ Employee Lifecycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➔ External Communications➔ Customer Lifecycle➔ Stakeholder Transformation



United Way
British Columbia

Working with communities in BC's Interior, Lower Mainland, Central & Northern Vancouver Island

UNITED WAY BC SOCIAL PURPOSE INSTITUTE

SOCIAL PURPOSE PRACTICE

Decision Lens

Make decisions that advance your social purpose

A social purpose company adopts a social purpose decision lens to guide its everyday decisions. The decision lens establishes the guard rails for the company's approach to work plans, budgets, capital expenditures, investments, product development, mergers, and more. A purpose lens enables everyone in the company, especially leadership, to demonstrate commitment to the social purpose. It tells employees when to say yes and when to say no – it is a holistic lens through which all decisions are made.

WHY ADOPT THIS PRACTICE?

It is important that all executive and staff have a practical tool to incorporate your company's social purpose into daily decisions. Such a social purpose commitment ensures consistency in the way you make decisions around your social purpose. It helps with agile decision-making and fosters organizational clarity. Failure to align decisions with your company's social purpose can result in loss of morale, cynicism, and stakeholder mistrust. Most significantly, having a social purpose decision lens can drive innovation and help advance your purpose.

WHEN TO ADOPT THIS PRACTICE?

Your company should adopt a social purpose decision lens shortly after adopting its social purpose to begin fostering alignment right away.

INSTRUCTION

Set up a meeting with key staff to consider the social purpose principles you would like to embody in your organization to bring it to life and foster authenticity. Review the examples below for ideas and inspiration. Note that the sample practices below take very different approaches. A decision lens can be very detailed, or it can be shorter and succinct. Choose the style that best aligns with your organizational culture.

FEATURED PRACTICES FROM

Coast Capital

We exist to build better futures together by unlocking financial opportunities that positively impact people and communities.

[Coastcapitalsavings.com](https://coastcapitalsavings.com)

coastcapital

Recycling Alternative

We exist to transform our wasteful ways. RecyclingAlternative.com



IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES

Coast Capital Social Purpose Decision Lens

Our Social Purpose

At Coast Capital, our Social Purpose “building better futures together by unlocking financial opportunities to positively impact people and communities” is a shared commitment by everyone in our business.

Each word of our purpose has been carefully selected to define our intent:

- **Building** speaks to the active role we will take as catalysts to drive positive change.
- **Better** speaks to the measurable outcome we want to achieve toward a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable economy.
- **Futures** speaks to the impact we wish to have on individuals and businesses now and in the future, for current and future generations.
- **Together**, speaks to our approach, which will be in collaboration with our stakeholders: members, employees, partners, suppliers and our broader ecosystem.

Our purpose drives the behaviours and daily decision-making of leadership and employees. As a lens through which decisions are made, our Social Purpose tells us when to say yes and when to say no and helps us to address which projects to prioritize, stop or delay.

Our Social Purpose Decision Lens

Our Enterprise Social Purpose Decision Lens is intended to guide employees’ daily decisions by asking a set of questions that help to determine whether the initiative, activity, etc., in front of them is purpose driving, purpose neutral, or purpose contra.

The assessment uses the acronym BUILD:

Building better futures for the member, employee, or community it supports

Ask yourself: does the item drive better futures, is it neutral, or is it contra to our purpose?

Unlocking financial opportunity

Ask yourself: does the item drive financial opportunity for the member, employee or community, is it neutral, or is it contra to our purpose?

Inclusive, equitable and accessible

Ask yourself: does the item drive inclusivity, equity and accessibility (systemic inequities often undermine attempts to build a better future and unlock financial opportunities), is it neutral, or is it contra?

Living our values and behaviours

Ask yourself: does the item provide an opportunity for us to demonstrate our shared values and the behaviours that bring them to life, is it neutral, or is it contra?

Driving our Social Purpose Impact Plan

Ask yourself: does the item drive our Social Purpose Goals, is it neutral, or is it contra to achieving the Goals?

The tool is intended to be simple and memorable and is to be used as a “gut-check” for day-to-day decision making, helping employees think about how they are bringing our purpose to life in their role.

In addition to this “enterprise” version, tailored versions have been developed to address specific uses such as product development and selection of service providers and community partners.

The decision lens tools will be fully operationalized starting in 2023 with a plan to capture learnings throughout the year and potentially refine the approach by end of year.



IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES

Recycling Alternative Social Purpose Decision Lens

Our Social Purpose Commitment

At Recycling Alternative, we believe that we all share responsibility in how we produce, manage, and recover waste because THERE IS NO AWAY. Our social purpose To Transform Our Wasteful Ways is not only about materials management and recovery but is also about our values as a society. "Our Wasteful Ways" relates to our attitudes and behaviour, in how we consume and how we work together. When we talk about "Transforming Our Wasteful Ways", Recycling Alternative strives to ensure that all aspects of our operation from our warehouse floor to our fleet, to our drivers out on the road, to our office and admin teams reflect Recycling Alternative's concern around wastefulness of all sorts in society and our company mandate to do something about it by helping our clients reduce and recover their waste responsibly. Our internal operations must reflect the same principles we deliver to our clients externally, and therefore Recycling Alternative's administrative supply chain and operational decisions are made in the context of reducing waste and our company wide commitment to Transform Our Wasteful Ways as we grow and continue delivering our services in the community.

ABOUT THE UNITED WAY BC SOCIAL PURPOSE INSTITUTE

The United Way BC Social Purpose Institute (UW SPI) exists to grow business for good, partnering with companies and collaborating with governments, allied organizations, and others to grow the Social Purpose Business movement. We help businesses define and implement their social purpose to drive both business growth and societal good and champion a purpose-led economy, accelerating the new business ethic to create long-term well-being for all. Together, we build a better world through business.

For more information, visit us at www.socialpurpose.ca

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Coro Strandberg is Social Purpose Advisor to United Way BC. She helped create the United Way BC Social Purpose Institute. She has over 30 years experience helping businesses become a force for good and is a national thought leader on social purpose business.

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The United Way BC Social Purpose Institute is honored to operate as guests on the unceded and traditional territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, the x̣̣ṃ̣əθḳ̣ʷəỵ̣əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səilwətaʔ /Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.



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