



Hello Friends:

How is your spring going? Many see spring as a time of renewal and regeneration which is celebratory enough, but I also see spring as an “awakening”: a time of coming into a re-imagined, or even brand new, awareness of the possibilities we can find in our world. This newsletter features those things that I think are born from being awakened: amplifying, mobilizing, accelerating, scaling and leveraging – all in aid of harnessing the market as a tool for social good.

Recently, the word “woke” has emerged with a slightly altered meaning from the original, now relating to being aware of and actively attentive to important social issues. Even with its newer, hipper clothes, it still relates to “awakening”, and fits very well into my focus for this spring:

- Uncovering next generation practices in corporate social responsibility
- Helping industry associations support their sectors to address their sustainability risks
- Building the sustainability competence of boards of directors
- Creating a social purpose business movement in Canada
- Unlocking the assets of universities and colleges to contribute to social outcomes

So, wake up, grab a coffee and let's see what's possible!

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News

Amplifying Best Practices in Corporate Social Responsibility

I recently published a thought leader paper on [Trends, Barriers and Opportunities in Corporate Social Responsibility](#), on behalf of the federal government. A key finding of the report, which investigated leading practices of over 30 businesses across Canada, is that businesses are “pivoting to purpose”. Business leaders believe corporate social responsibility (CSR) is outdated terminology and no longer reflects their approach to rooting their societal mission into the core business. They also discuss a new approach in which the businesses co-locate with their community partners and embed those partners within their operations. These two GreenBiz articles profile the research findings on “purpose” and “partnerships” and were well received by CSR practitioners around the world. Read them here: [Is this the end of CSR?](#) and [Purpose Partnerships: How Mission-Driven Companies Approach Business Relationships](#).



Mobilizing Sustainable Industry Associations

I continue to help industry associations on their [sustainability journeys](#), and recently convened a meeting of 15 industry associations in Ottawa to hear from Canada's director general in charge of developing Canada's approach to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It was a very productive session and revealed that more and more industry association members are using the SDGs as a tool to inform their work. The associations recommended that the federal government help industries understand which SDGs are most relevant to their sector and also help identify the risks and opportunities represented by those SDGs.

It is good to see industry associations developing CSR and sustainability programs for their members – and indeed this is essential to accelerate sustainability. Thus I was thrilled to be commissioned by the Canadian Construction Association (CCA) to develop a CSR guide for its members, now available on the [CCA website](#). The guide profiles the risks of and opportunities for pursuing CSR and the UN SDGs, and sets out basic, advanced and best practices in CSR in the industry. Check it out for ideas and inspiration.



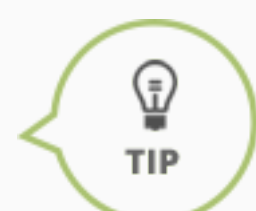
Accelerating Sustainable Boards

I continue to partner with Governance Professionals of Canada on its thought leadership to advocate for boards of directors – and the governance professionals that support them – to build their sustainability competency and oversight. As we all know, unless boards support stewarding the social and environmental performance of their organizations, sustainability will not advance. To help accelerate this field, I have been providing professional development on this topic to corporate secretaries and general counsel. If you would like to build your capacities in this area, check out this [certification program](#), particularly the strategic governance course, which includes my sustainable governance module. If you are in Vancouver or can get there May 27, I am chairing a conference on this topic, designed to scale this approach to governance in Canada. Click [here](#) for details and see below for a 30% discount code.



Scaling Social Purpose in Business

Since helping the United Way of the Lower Mainland launch its [Social Purpose Institute](#) a year ago, I have been working on tools and business models to scale social purpose in business. We are now partnering on two cohorts, equipping 16 companies to embed and activate their social purpose in Greater Vancouver. This [article](#) showcases these innovative companies and the criteria they are using to develop their best-fit social purpose as their reason for being. As more and more businesses become social purpose-driven all their assets will contribute to societal progress – strengthening these businesses and the communities where they operate.



Leveraging Higher Purpose in Higher Education

Post-secondary institutions are also being called to leverage more of their assets towards addressing societal challenges. I recently collaborated with the McConnell Foundation and the Canadian Association of University Business Officers to develop this [inventory of university and college administrator social impact initiatives](#). Lots of inspiration in this article, showing that [university administrators are becoming social purpose](#) too!



Events

Sustainability-Competent Boards

Attend this day-long session in Vancouver sponsored by Governance Professionals of Canada which I'm chairing to learn how and why to build sustainability-competent boards. Take this professional development course to get ahead of and harness this trend in your work or pass along to others who advise boards in your organization.



The Case for ESG Governance: Best Practices and Perspectives on the Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility Role of the Board and Governance Professional
Monday May 27, 2019 / 8am - 6pm

For more information and to register: [Link](#). Save 30% with this partner code: PARTNERESG2019. (Need to register as a partner to access the code.)

Sustainability-Competent Professionals

Check out this free one-hour webinar to learn about strategies to mobilize professionals and the organizations that represent them on sustainability competencies. In this webinar I share research I have conducted on the opportunities to engage Realtors and Managing Brokers on sustainability practices. I also discuss a professional development pathway for real estate organizations to equip their members with sustainability know-how. The model is replicable for other professional groups.

Sustainability and Professional Excellence in Real Estate, Real Estate Foundation of BC
Thursday May 16, 2019 / 12 - 1pm PST

For more information and to register: [Link](#).



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