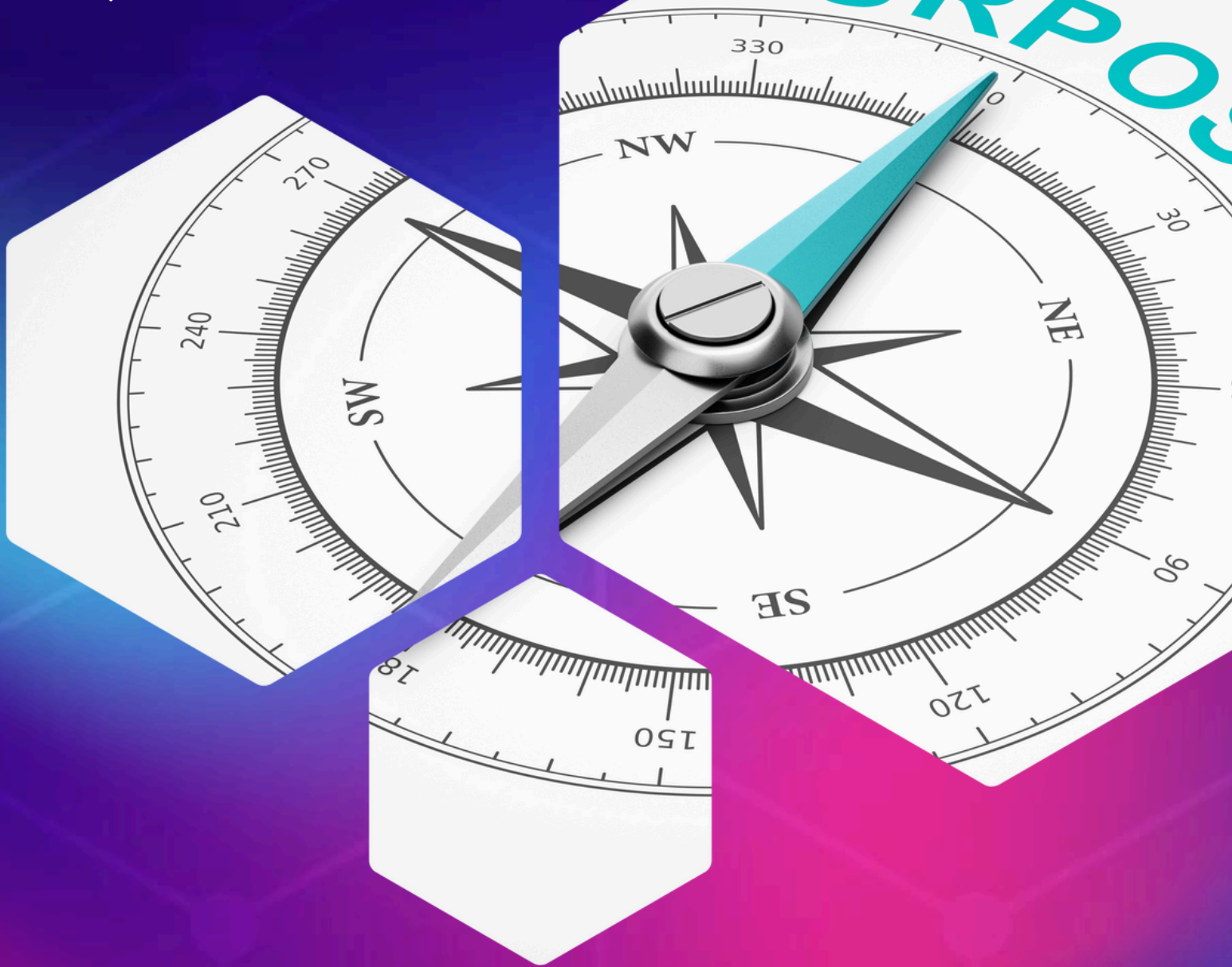




**TALENT4**  
PERFORMANCE

**PURPOSE**



**BUSINESS STRATEGY**

# Purpose

How to develop a clear and inspiring purpose statement

# How to Develop a Clear and Inspiring Purpose Statement

By Alli Gibbons & David Klaasen

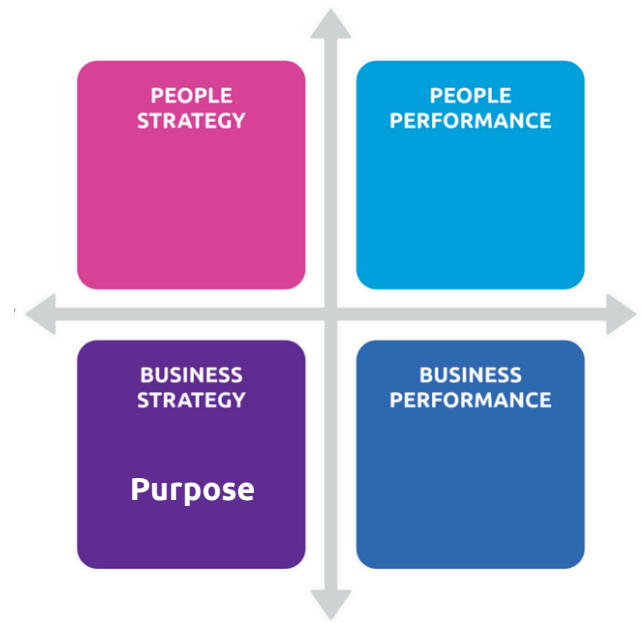
## Introduction

When you're working in a complex business environment, having a clear and inspiring **Purpose** statement is more than just a strategic necessity; it's the cornerstone of your company's identity.

It drives decision-making, shapes organisational culture, and unifies your team around a common goal. As Simon Sinek famously put it in *Start with Why (i)*, "People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it."

This guide will walk you through the steps to create a **Purpose** statement that not only clarifies why your business exists but also inspires everyone it touches—from employees to customers.

“  
People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it.  
”



The T4P Clarity Matrix™

## Understanding the power of purpose

A purpose statement isn't just a slogan or a marketing tool. It's the expression of your organisation's core reason for being—the very essence of why your business exists. As Dan Cable explores in *Alive at Work (ii)*, a well-defined purpose taps into the intrinsic motivation of your people, making their work more meaningful and fulfilling. When people understand how their work contributes to something greater, they become more engaged, innovative, and committed.

A purpose statement acts as the foundational element of your strategy, providing meaning and direction to all activities within the organisation. It's the anchor that ensures your vision, strategy, and culture are aligned, guiding every action and decision with clarity and intention.

## Step 1: Reflect on your core beliefs and values

To develop a purpose statement, start by reflecting on your company's core beliefs and values. Ask yourself, why does your business exist (beyond making a profit)? What are the principles that guide your decisions and actions? As Robert E. Quinn and Anjan V. Thakor highlight in *The Economics of Higher Purpose (iii)*, the most effective purpose statements resonate deeply with the values of the organisation and its stakeholders.

Consider the following questions to help clarify your core beliefs:

- What change do you want to create in the world?
- What impact do you want to have on your customers, employees, and the community?
- What values are non-negotiable in how you operate?

This introspective process is crucial. It ensures that your purpose statement isn't just aspirational but is grounded in the reality of what your business truly stands for.



## Step 2: Involve your team in the process

Creating a purpose statement shouldn't be a top-down exercise. Involve your team in the process to ensure that it reflects the collective aspirations and beliefs of your organisation. As Rosabeth Moss Kanter discusses in *SuperCorp (iv)*, the most successful purpose-driven companies create a sense of ownership by engaging their people in defining the purpose.

Hold workshops or focus groups where team members can share what motivates them and how they see the company's role in the world. This collaborative approach not only enriches the content of the purpose statement but also strengthens buy-in from everyone involved.

### Step 3: Craft the purpose statement

Now that you have a solid understanding of your core beliefs and have gathered input from your team, it's time to craft the purpose statement. A compelling purpose statement is:

- **Clear:** It should be easily understood by everyone in the organisation and resonate with them on a personal level.
- **Inspiring:** It should evoke an emotional response, motivating people to take action and contribute to the organisation's objectives.
- **Concise:** It should be short enough to remember but powerful enough to make an impact.

A great purpose statement answers the question: Why do we exist? Here are a few examples to inspire you:

- **Patagonia:** "We're in business to save our home planet."
- **Tesla:** "Accelerating the world's transition to sustainable energy."
- **Disney:** "Inspiring a better world through the power of stories."

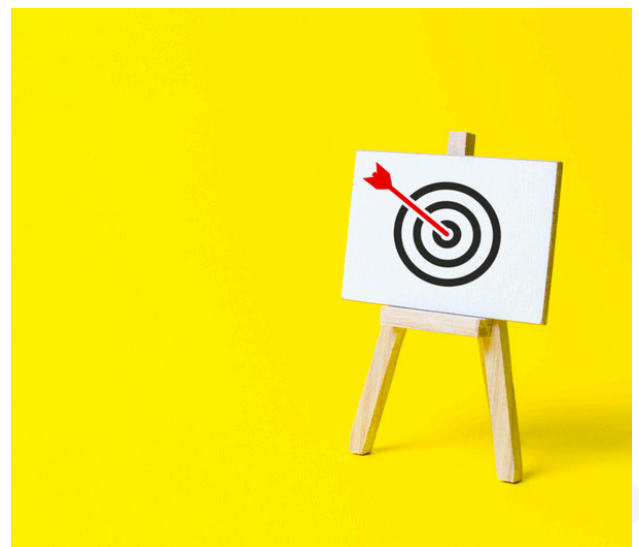
These examples are clear, emotionally resonant, and succinct, capturing the essence of the organisations' reasons for being.



### Step 4: Align your purpose with vision, strategy, and culture

Once you've crafted your purpose statement, it's essential to align it with your organisation's vision, strategy, and culture. Your purpose should inform every decision, from hiring practices to product development. Aligning purpose with vision ensures that every action taken by the organisation supports the overarching reason for your existence.

Start by integrating the purpose statement into your strategic planning processes. Use it as a filter for decision-making—ask yourself, does this decision align with our purpose? If the answer is no, reconsider your approach.



Similarly, ensure that your organisational culture reflects the purpose. This might involve redefining your values, updating your vision statement, or even restructuring certain aspects of your organisation to better align with your purpose. Purpose-driven companies often need to make tough choices to stay true to their purpose, but these choices are what set them apart and drive long-term success.



### Step 5: Communicate and live the purpose

A purpose statement is only as powerful as the commitment to live by it. Communicate your purpose consistently across all levels of the organisation and to all stakeholders. This communication should be more than just words on a wall; it should be demonstrated through actions.

Leadership plays a critical role in this step. Leaders must embody the purpose in their daily actions and decisions, serving as role models for the rest of the organisation. This commitment from the top ensures that the purpose permeates every aspect of the business.

In addition to internal communication, share your purpose with your customers and the broader community. Today's consumers are increasingly drawn to companies with a clear and authentic purpose. By publicly committing to your purpose, you not only differentiate your brand but also build deeper connections with your customers.

### Step 6: Measure and adapt

Finally, it's important to measure the impact of your purpose statement and be willing to adapt as needed. Use surveys, feedback loops, and performance metrics to gauge how well your purpose is being integrated into the organisation and how it's resonating with employees and customers.

As with any aspect of business, your purpose may need to evolve over time. Regularly revisit your purpose statement to ensure it remains relevant and aligned with your organisational goals. Adaptation doesn't mean losing sight of your core beliefs; it's about ensuring that your purpose continues to inspire and guide your organisation in a changing world.



## Conclusion

Developing a clear and inspiring **Purpose** statement is a transformative process that goes beyond simply crafting words on a page. It's about discovering the core of what drives your business and using that discovery to inspire, align, and guide every aspect of your organisation. By reflecting on your core beliefs, involving your team, crafting a compelling statement, aligning it with your **Vision, Strategy, and Culture**, living by it, and measuring its impact, you create a **Purpose** that not only clarifies why your business exists but also energises everyone it touches.

A well-defined **Purpose** is a powerful tool for differentiation, engagement, and long-term success. It's the beacon that guides your organisation through challenges and opportunities, ensuring that every step you take is purposeful and impactful.

If you would like to discuss how to develop your **Purpose** statement, we're here to help. We can guide you through the process and provide the tools and templates you need to succeed.

Get in touch today at

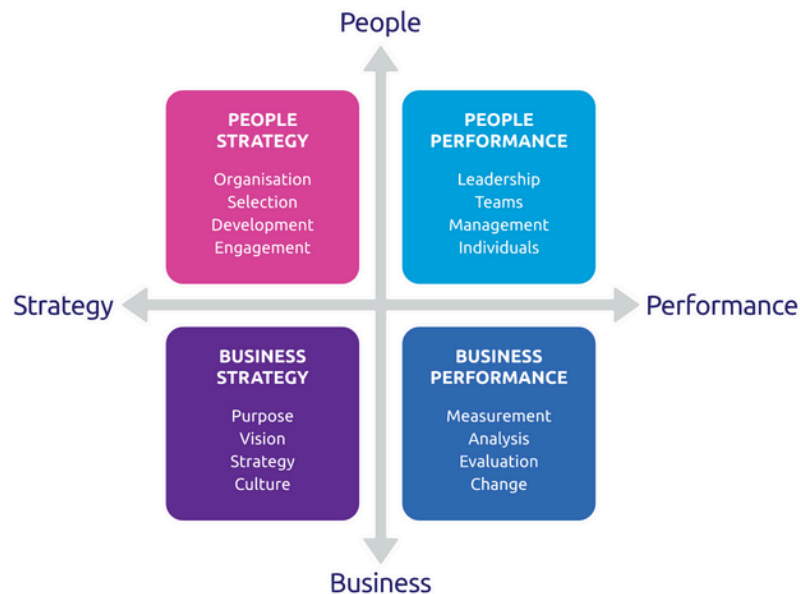
[info@talent4performance.co.uk](mailto:info@talent4performance.co.uk).



## REFERENCES

- (i) Sinek, S. (2009) *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*. New York: Portfolio.
- (ii) Cable, D. (2018) *Alive at Work: The Neuroscience of Helping Your People Love What They Do*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.
- (iii) Quinn, R.E. and Thakor, A.V. (2018) *The Economics of Higher Purpose: Eight Counterintuitive Steps for Creating a Purpose-Driven Organization*. Oakland: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- (iv) Kanter, R.M. (2009) *SuperCorp: How Vanguard Companies Create Innovation, Profits, Growth, and Social Good*. New York: Crown Business.

# The T4P Clarity Matrix™



How do you and your top team score on the **Purpose** element of the T4P Clarity Matrix™ Scorecard?

If you don't have your score yet, complete it now. It only takes 3 minutes, is free and you get instant feedback.

If your top team completes it, we will give you a complimentary Executive Summary.

This will collate the results and prioritise key actions you can take over the next 3 – 6 months to improve performance.

[Get your score](#)



For more information on how Talent4Performance can help you develop your **Purpose** statement, get in touch today at [info@talent4performance.co.uk](mailto:info@talent4performance.co.uk).

## Business Strategy - Purpose



**TALENT4**  
PERFORMANCE

[www.talent4performance.co.uk](http://www.talent4performance.co.uk)