

WHAT MAKES A GOOD STRATEGY?



HIGH-LEVEL STANDS

Make it clear what you stand for with this strategy. What societal issues are you helping to address? Be inspirational and aspirational at this level. Get people excited with what you are doing. These should be informed by global trends, stakeholder input, and a robust Materiality Assessment/Impact Screening.



POLICIES / COMMITMENTS

Now is the time to get less aspirational, and more specific. Craft a company policy for the public domain that details your commitments. Collaborate with key stakeholders, especially relevant NGOs for the topic of interest. Align with external pledges (SDGs, Global Compact, others).



GOALS



CO-CREATION

Always develop them with others for relevance. Be sure they are science-based. Start with a few key metrics; evolve over time.



TIMING

Give careful thought to how to phase your goals. You can accomplish more if you balance short (2 years), medium (3-5 years), and long-term (5-10+).



COST

Do your best to estimate costs for each phase of the strategy (ideation, socialization, implementation, sustainment).



GLIDEPATH

Builds confidence that your goals are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timebound), and you have a road to achieve them.

PARTNERSHIPS

Think carefully and strategically about the best partners. This runs the gamut from co-creation of content to helping with implementation, measurement, and communication. Think especially of peers, academics, NGOs, trade groups, and—sometimes—competitors (pre-competitively).

TOOLS

The best way to get people to do things is to build their capability and remove obstacles in their path. Critically important to develop and deploy best practice toolkits relevant for the intended audiences. Always use adult learning theory. Measure success of the training itself and the impact the new capability has, over time.

STORIES

Increasingly transparent communication is the goal. Identify audiences (internal and external), craft the message for those audiences, and decide which channels are best for those messages. Everything should have an authentic story, not a series of disconnected information. Also decide which reporting frameworks are important, and whether third-party certification makes sense (and when in your journey).

ADVOCACY & RECOGNITION

When you have enough of a foundation, ramp up advocacy efforts. Decide which platform presentations, panels, media articles, social media campaigns, internal programs and external awards through which to advocate, celebrate your success, receive recognition for it, and use your “voice” for broad impact.