

talk regularly – both internally and publicly – about the company’s commitment to address risks to people across the company’s operations and value chain, and key challenges and opportunities for achieving this goal.

LEADERSHIP
NO.

1

A written statement or occasional verbal restatement of a company’s policy commitment to act with respect for human rights may or may not reflect and shape business practices.

Where senior leaders talk regularly – to the workforce as much as in public – about the company’s human rights commitment and what this means for the company in terms of challenges and opportunities, it is more likely that respect for human rights will be viewed across the workforce as relevant and important for the business. It is also more likely that the wider workforce will feel able to talk openly about human rights issues, including problems that arise, enabling them to be addressed earlier and more effectively.

Evidence that senior leaders speak about the company’s commitment to respect human rights in this way signals coherence and consistency and an intent that others in the company should reflect the same priorities in their words and actions. Evidence that they speak of challenges and opportunities for achieving respect for human rights signals a readiness and expectation that the company should learn and improve in this aspect of its performance.

KEY QUESTIONS FOR LEADERS TO ASK OR BE ASKED

- When, how often and to whom do senior leaders talk about human rights and what respecting human rights means for the company?
- Do they project these messages internally as well as externally?
- Do they project these messages across the company or only to people in certain parts of the company, and if so, why?
- Does the workforce perceive these messages as authentic and representative of how leaders wish the workforce to act?

CONNECTION TO CULTURE



AUTHENTICITY



LEARNING

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TYPE OF APPLICATION

The types of use, whether inside a company or by those outside a company, to which this indicator particularly lends itself:

Internal

- Self-assessment / internal audit
- Third party assessment / culture audit

External

- Investor engagement

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE



DOCUMENTATION

- Internal communications from senior leaders
- Records of relevant internal forums and meetings
- Public statements or speeches by leaders
- Statements in company disclosures or posted by third parties
- Comments in media including social media



WORKFORCE PERSPECTIVES

- Survey / interviews / other feedback from a cross-section of the workforce regarding:
 - Awareness of leaders’ views regarding respect for human rights
- Consistency of those views with other explicit or implicit messages from direct managers and top management
- Consistency of those views with senior leaders’ actions and decisions

SENIOR LEADERS AT CORPORATE, REGIONAL, COUNTRY AND BUSINESS UNIT LEVELS...

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ADDRESSING LIMITATIONS

The limits of this indicator lie in the need for leaders to be adequately informed about human rights risks related to the company in order to project meaningful messages about respect for human rights, and in the risk that there are disincentives or barriers that hinder the workforce from translating these messages into their daily practices. This is a particular risk where leaders articulate the company’s commitment externally but not internally, or only to the function(s) that lead(s) on human rights, rather than the wider workforce.

This indicator will therefore be strengthened where there is complementary evidence in relation to one or more of the following indicators:

G9

L3

L7

L9

The most senior governing body and/or its relevant sub committees... challenges any top management performance incentives that may promote behaviors that undermine respect for human rights.

Senior leaders at corporate, regional, country and business unit levels... pro-actively and regularly seek the insights and critique of credible experts to inform the company’s understanding of and responses to human rights issues.

Senior leaders at corporate, regional, country and business unit levels... signal the importance of the internal function(s) that lead(s) on human rights by ensuring their insights are integrated into decision-making processes.

Senior leaders at corporate, regional, country and business unit levels... encourage the workforce to raise questions or concerns about the company’s impacts on co-workers or external stakeholders

Where the governing body does this, it is more likely that there is alignment between the commitments they assert and the practices they pursue.

Where senior leaders do this, they are more likely to have the necessary knowledge of key human rights risks to inform internal and external discussions of related challenges and opportunities.

Where senior leaders do this, it is more likely that there is alignment between the commitments they assert and the practices they and the wider workforce pursue.

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OVERVIEW

APPLICATIONS

SUPPORTING INDICATOR

RATIONALE

SUPPORTING
INDICATORS