

encourage the workforce to raise questions or concerns about the company's impacts on co-workers or external stakeholders.

LEADERSHIP
NO.

9

OVERVIEW

For any company to manage risks to people, and the related risks to the business, effectively, it is important to identify potential impacts at an early stage, before harms occur or escalate. A company's own workforce offers an invaluable set of eyes and ears that can capture issues at this early stage and elevate them for attention.

Where leaders seek out and welcome such insights from the workforce, it is more likely that people will feel safe and see value in bringing them to the attention of management and that they can therefore be addressed before significant harm occurs.

Evidence of leaders encouraging the workforce to raise this type of questions or concerns signals that there is an openness and positive approach to hearing what is happening – including when this is “bad news” – and a recognition of the value of the information and insights this brings for continuous improvement.

APPLICATIONS

KEY QUESTIONS FOR LEADERS TO ASK OR BE ASKED

- Are there any formal channels for the workforce to raise questions/concerns regarding perceived impacts on people?
- What evidence is there that these channels are trusted?
- How do senior leaders build confidence among the workforce about raising questions/concerns?
- In what cases have questions/concerns raised in this way led to new insights and/or practices?

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 “speak up” or other mechanisms
- Records of issues raised and action taken



CONVERSATIONS

- with senior management
- with individuals who have raised issues (with attention to confidentiality and other protections)



WORKFORCE PERSPECTIVES

Survey / interviews / other feedback from a cross-section of the workforce regarding:

- Awareness of the possibility to raise questions / concerns regarding impacts on people
- Confidence that raising questions / concerns is safe and worthwhile
- Awareness of any results from raising questions / concerns
- The value of raising concerns
- The value of hearing concerns from other stakeholders

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SUPPORTING
INDICATORS

ADDRESSING LIMITATIONS

The limits of this indicator lie in the tensions that may arise between an intent and desire among leaders to address concerns raised by the workforce regarding the company’s impacts, and business pressures or incentives that may prevent or dissuade them from doing so in practice.

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

G1

The most senior governing body and/or its relevant subcommittees... reviews and challenges the company’s business model and strategy to ensure any inherent human rights risks are identified and addressed.

Where the governing body does this, it is less likely that the top management will face incentives to ignore human rights related concerns raised by the workforce.

G6

The most senior governing body and/or its relevant subcommittees... ensures that cross-functional processes are in place to share information about human rights risks; agree actions to address human rights risks; and monitor progress against those actions.

Where the governing body does this, it is more likely that feedback from the workforce regarding impacts on people can be readily integrated and addressed in all areas of the business.

G8

The most senior governing body and/or its relevant subcommittees... ensures that performance incentives for top management are in place that reflect the company’s salient human rights issues; are supported by relevant KPIs; and are given reasonable weight in compensation schemes.

Where the governing body does this, it is more likely that incentives will support and enable leaders to reflect concerns raised by the workforce in their decision-making.

G9

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

Where the governing body does this, it is less likely that leaders will be disincentivized from reflecting in their decision-making any concerns raised by the workforce.