

CSR REPORTS

A survey found that CSR reports are nearing universal practice: 86% of the S&P 500 publish them ([Governance and Accountability Institute, 2019](#)). A study by [WBCSD](#) shows that by their measures, reporting is improving, 95% of companies acknowledge the SDGs, integrated (financial and non-financial information) reporting is on the rise, 87% of reports use GRI, governance is strengthening, and 87% of companies are producing a digital report. Companies engage in this practice as a way to share the story of their investments in society, including impact and areas of focus.

WHAT DO EFFECTIVE CSR REPORTS LOOK LIKE?

[Baruch College's CSR-R Monitor](#) scores CSR reports based on 10 components and their respective weights:

- Integrity assurance, environment, philanthropy and community involvement, stakeholder engagement, labor relations, governance, anti-corruption, human rights, codes of conduct, and executive message.

[Global Giving](#) shares a checklist of 9 key components of a CSR report:

- Business overview, transparency, authenticity, letter from the CEO, sustainability goals, target performance summary, case studies, issue prioritization, and sources.

Additional resources offer these criteria:

- **Authentic:** honest reporting using stakeholder voices; **Material:** the most important issues; and **Impacts:** outcomes and achievements ([CSR Reporting](#))
- **Leadership** voice, **governance**/business model, **sustainability** context, **impact** assessment, **stakeholder** identification, **materiality** analysis, **performance** indicators, and **narrative** about engagement with stakeholders ([you matter, 2020](#)).

WHAT'S NEW IN CSR REPORTING?

- [Intel](#): digital pdf, clear table of contents anchors the report, commitment to transparency upfront provides overview of reporting structure, Covid-19 response (pg. 4), linked menu on each page, goals results summary (pg. 6), image of RISE framework with clear focus areas linked to SDGs (pg. 7), clear purpose (pg. 14), materiality matrix (pg. 29), recognizing employee sustainability efforts (pg. 34), diversity & inclusion section (pg. 55), images and quotes from employees and community partners.
- [Pfizer](#): digital web page with downloadable [pdf](#) version, story blocks that connect to focus areas; clear purpose (pg. 6), linked menu on each page, clear "Bold Moves" (pg. 7), articles to add storytelling elements to focus areas, commitments/updates on goals throughout.
- [General Mills](#): digital report with downloadable [pdf](#) version, blocks arranged by pillars, link to page; statement by CEO and CFO, clear purpose and metrics (pg. 2), visual progress highlights (pg. 3), materiality grid (pg. 4), stakeholder graphic (pg. 6), sections arranged by four pillars, global inclusion section (pg. 54), link to video (pg. 74), images of employees, community partners, and programs.

BENEFITS OF CSR REPORTS

- Creates efficiencies in reporting; companies can refer all those requesting data to the reports instead of providing customized responses.
- In developing the report, the author socializes CSR work across all business units as data requests are made. Some companies report more than 100 contributors to the report, and making connections to staff and teams where there were no previous connections.
- The report can assist with talent acquisition as it stands as the company's purpose statement.