



## **New Research from CECP Reveals Corporate Purpose Integration as a Key Driver of Business Value and Resilience**

*Study finds companies with integrated purpose-driven systems report 2x higher median revenue and 30% higher innovation rates compared to peers*

**NEW YORK, NY, April 21, 2026** – A new study released today by **Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose**© (CECP) demonstrates that companies with deeply integrated corporate purpose across their core business systems achieve significantly better business outcomes in comparison to those that treat purpose as a PR exercise. The 2026 edition of [\*Corporate Purpose: Driving Business Value\*](#) highlights that while 92% of S&P Global 1200 companies now have a purpose statement, the true competitive advantage lies in "Purpose-Driven Systems", where purpose is hardwired into a company's governance, incentives, and operations.

Despite recent shifts in the global business landscape, the research indicates that most organizations are not retreating from corporate purpose. According to a CECP Pulse Survey from March 2026 of 526 respondents, a majority are maintaining or accelerating their commitment: 28% have not changed their strategy, while 26% are leaning further into purpose-led programs.

The research identifies a material difference in performance across the "Purpose Integration Continuum", a framework for implementing purpose across the organization. Key findings include:

- **Organizational Scale:** Companies further along the Integration Continuum are not small; they boast a median revenue nearly **2x higher** than companies at the "Stated Purpose" stage, suggesting that business integration correlates with long-term scale and longevity.
- **Innovation & Creativity:** Companies with a well-defined mission report a **30% increase in innovation rates**, reflecting how clarity and alignment unlock creative execution.
- **Operational Resilience:** Nearly all CEOs (99%) now view these efforts as central to long-term value creation and competitive advantage rather than optional or reputational exercises.
- **Workforce Stability:** Highly integrated companies see significantly lower voluntary turnover (6.3%) compared to those that only state their purpose (8.1%).

"The presence of a purpose statement is no longer a differentiator, it is the baseline, with 92% of the S&P Global 1200 already on board," said **Kate Stobbe, Director of Insights, CECP**. "Our data shows that the most resilient and successful companies are those that move beyond aspiration to execution. By embedding purpose into durable systems like



executive compensation and risk management, these organizations aren't just doing good; they are building a strategic infrastructure that drives measurable returns and protects companies' long-term value through volatility."

The report contains several company case studies. In 2015, Walmart made a controversial decision to raise its starting wage to \$9 an hour—a move that initially triggered a 10% drop in its share price and drew skepticism from investors. At the time, the company faced high employee turnover, mounting pressure from labor activists, and deteriorating customer experience. Then CEO Doug McMillon responded by listening to frontline workers and addressing core operational issues, including wages, scheduling stability, store leadership, training, and inventory management. While the decision carried short-term market costs, it helped catalyze Walmart's sustained sales growth, online expansion, and a roughly 10% improvement in employee retention, contributing to long-term value creation, with U.S. sales growth every year since 2015 and global revenue reaching \$681 billion.

For the methodology, CECP conducted a five-year longitudinal analysis of the S&P Global 1200 companies to distinguish between different stages of purpose adoption throughout the business. The research utilized a **Purpose Integration Index** based on 11 observable and externally verifiable management actions across five domains: governance, incentives, risk management, climate, and human rights. Companies were categorized into three stages—Stated Purpose, Operationalized Purpose, and Purpose-Driven Systems. Supplemental data includes a Pulse Survey of 526 respondents regarding strategy shifts and business case sentiment on purpose.

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### **About Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose (CECP)**

Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose® (CECP) is the only nonpartisan business counsel and network dedicated to driving measurable returns on purpose. We promote responsible purpose-driven business as it increases customer loyalty, builds employee engagement, improves brand trust, attracts top talent, connects with strategic investors, and contributes to the bottom line.

More than 200 of the world's leading companies seek to improve their return on purpose through access to CECP's solutions in research and insights, strategy and benchmarking,



and convening and communications. With our companies, we harness the power of purpose for business, stakeholders, and society.

For more information, visit <http://cecp.co>.