

# Four Practices for Building Regenerative Organisational Cultures

By [Dr. Natasha Budd](#) and [Marcus de Courtenay](#)

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?Our thinking is shifting. No longer are we focused solely on sustainability as our long-term goal. Instead, we are seeking more regenerative futures. Regenerative thinking is about creating the conditions conducive to life. It asks us: what makes life flourish and thrive?

Regenerative organisations have been described as “living, evolving and naturally functioning organisations where abundance and resilience are recurring outcomes of its underlying health.” These are places where life is affirmed, cultivated, and replenished. Rather than humans and the broader environment being seen as a resource to be used by organisations, we are instead central to their reason for being. The result: the wellbeing of an entire system of which we are fundamentally part.

Increasingly, this shift is finding its way to major organisations such as Walmart and Patagonia. People are looking for organisations which champion their well-being through initiatives such as mental health support and align with their purpose and values. So, as we continue to dive further into regenerative ways of thinking, we want to highlight four key practices for leaders who are looking to build and lead

regenerative organisations:

## 1. Integrating regenerative mindsets into our organisation's purpose and/or values

Our organisational **purpose** is our “Why” – the reason we exist. By connecting our purpose to stewardship, regeneration or giving back to people and the planet, regenerative practices will become a core part of our *raison d'être*. This means, every day when we are making decisions, we will be guided by this broader framework for understanding our work and finding solutions. We will prioritise action which regenerates and ensure this sits on par with other important considerations. For example, when the opportunities arise, we prioritise a team celebration or a green alternative in our product offerings.

Our **values** are how we commit to behaving in our day-to-day. Identifying regenerative approaches as one of our values is another way of enshrining this mindset in our organisational design. Well-embedded values filter across an organisation into all our teams' everyday interactions. The sooner we enshrine this way of thinking as a part of our DNA, the sooner

we will begin to see the influence on our ways of working and operating in the world.

## **2. Mapping the interconnectedness of our ecosystem**

One concept central to regenerative mindsets is that life is fundamentally interconnected – our actions, no matter how small, will impact the broader system. Taking the time to map out our full interconnectedness means we have a better understanding both of our current impact and our potential influence for good. If we are intentional about being regenerative, we might be surprised by the number of people and systems we can move toward regenerative action across our greater ecosystem. Think broadly about your:

- **Supply chain**
  - What do your suppliers believe in and contribute to? Do they share your values?
  - Are you able to influence regenerative behaviours through your supplier relationships or tendering processes?
- **Products**
  - How are your products operating within the

broader ecosystem? What is their lifecycle?

- Is it possible for them to circulate as part of a closed-loop system?
- Can you reduce or recycle your waste?

- **Networks**

- How are you influencing your professional networks?
- How do you express your purpose and values with conviction to those around you?

- **Customers and clients**

- How are you influencing your customers or clients?
- Are you effectively utilising your media resources or eco-nudges?

- **Team members**

- How are you influencing your teams?
- How are you supporting and replenishing their well-being?
- Are you encouraging your team members to take localised action?
- Are you enabling their work and energy to be regenerative?

### 3. Investing in creativity and innovation

The solutions to many of our present challenges will require creativity and innovation. In fact, the International Energy Agency estimates that by 2050 nearly half of the necessary greenhouse gas emissions reductions will require technologies that are not yet on the market. Sometimes leaders will pay lip service to the importance of research, but less frequently will they take the next step to operationalise it. As a leader in regeneration, we need to value and prioritise research and then action the outcomes.

What is best practice in your industry? How are people working towards more regenerative technologies and ways of working? What are the preliminary outcomes on these approaches? We want to be curious and engaged about these questions and devote the time and resources to take action around them.

Not only does this fulfill a deeper purpose but it is also key to organisational survival. We are seeing that climate research really is a competitive advantage rather than just another compliance check. Proactive integration of research is the only way to remain at the forefront of the industry. The World Economic Forum details a range of climate change solutions led by business such as aggressive net zero goals or tools for farmers to adapt to changing weather. These organisations are leading their respective markets in evolving with our changing world.

#### 4. Recalibrating our leadership and decision-making processes to move beyond short-termism

Rather than seeing our commitments to regeneration as a nice to have but secondary to the bottom line, regenerative leaders see them as a moral purpose – intrinsic to our being in this world. We must pass beyond the short-termism which opposes this work as costing extra money and effort.

We know that privileging short-term concerns is one of the major challenges in combating ecological decay – our minds are biased against long-term threats and trends in favour of our immediate problems. However, being able to think long-term about climate change is an imperative for the longevity of businesses (as well as humans!).

We can take steps to try and combat this bias. For example, Ernst and Young suggest three tips for leaders in this space, including finding investors who share a long-term orientation, designing and communicating long-term plans and prioritising skills training for your people. Increasingly, it is incumbent on us to take a moment for trans-generational thinking.

## Need More Help?

Keen to find out more about how to lead regeneratively for people, places, tradition, and planet? Whether it be the way you lead individually or a whole of system approach, Performance Frontiers can help guide leaders to more deeply live their aspirations for a regenerative world. Speak to Natasha today about how we can encourage you to take these four regenerative practices and integrate them into what you and your organisation do every day.

[Reach Out to Natasha](#)



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