BRILLIANT BOOK. LUCA LEONARDINI HAS FIGURED OUT A FAST-PACED, RELATABLE, AND ACTIONABLE UNIVERSAL BLUEPRINT TO GUIDE THOSE READY FOR AN INNER JOURNEY TO FIND THEIR PURPOSE. I LOVED IT!

CLAUDE SILVER, Chief Heart Officer at VaynerMedia

PURPOSE-DRIVEN INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS WILL LEAD THE FUTURE. "CODIFY YOUR PURPOSE" IS ESSENTIAL READING FOR ANYONE WHO WANTS TO BE AHEAD OF THE PACK.

CHIP CONLEY, Founder at Modern Elder Academy

# CODIFY YOUR PURPOSE

# THE GUIDE TO AN EMPOWERING JOURNEY OF PERSONAL DISCOVERY

# Luca Leonardini

Prologue by Francesco Derchi Foreword by Francesco Guidara

**Purpose Driven Academy** 

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# PRAISE FOR CODIFY YOUR PURPOSE

Brilliant book. Luca Leonardini has figured out a fast-paced, relatable, and actionable universal blueprint to guide those ready for an inner journey to find their purpose. I loved it! CLAUDE SILVER, Chief Heart Officer at VaynerMedia

Purpose-driven individuals and organizations will lead the future. "Codify your purpose" is essential reading for anyone who wants to be ahead of the pack.

CHIP CONLEY, Founder at Modern Elder Academy

Remember why you started. Luca helps you reignite that fire within to connect purpose to intent to outcomes. You can't change the world until you change yourself. BRIAN SOLIS, Futurist, Author of "LifeSCALE: How to Live a More Creative, Productive, and Happy Life"

In a world with a crisis of meaning, we need hope for the future and a path to reclaiming our purpose as we build that future. Leonardini's practical guide, "*Codify Your Purpose*", reveals that path to the reader. If you want to take your first brave steps towards finding meaning and purpose in your life and work, this book is a great place to start.

BERNADETTE JIWA, Founder of Story Republic and Creator of the Story Skills Workshop

Many organizations spend time articulating mission and vision. Luca's new book challenges us to consider something deeper and more fundamental.

ANN HANDLEY, Chief Content Officer, MarketingProfs and WSJ Bestselling author of "*Everybody Writes*"

The concept of "Codify your purpose" comes at a time when people are universally unhinged because of the pandemic and looking for new meaning in their lives and in their works. Focusing on personal purpose, showing a path to clarity and how to achieve it, is really impactful. Moreover, the book offers an immersive dimension that transforms content into "edutainment" which is the best way to really connect with an audience. Genius!

### GABOR GEORGE BURT, Founder at Slingshot Group

Knowing your purpose gives your life meaning, simplicity, focus and drive. But if you feel like you are drifting through life unsure of what your place really is, you aren't alone. It's a common struggle that people face. In this wonderful book Luca Leonardini will take you on a step-by-step journey to discover your values and passions as a way to find your purpose. JAMIE ANDERSON, Professor, Boutique Hotel & Art Gallery Owner, Cyclist

Purpose-driven individuals and organizations are critical for sustainable growth and success in an ever-unpredictable environment. "Codify Your Purpose" is a must-read for those who want to understand how to take the first step to codify individual purpose and provides simple tools to begin an empowering discovery journey.

SALIM ISMAIL, Founder at OpenExO and ExO Works, Author of "Exponential Organizations", Board Member at X Prize, Founding Executive Director Singularity University To Barbara, my beloved wife.

# "You can't change the way people think, all you can do is give them a tool, the use of which will change their thinking."

Richard Buckminster Fuller Architect, inventor, designer, philosopher, futurist

# This book is that tool.

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# PROLOGUE

The conversation surrounding purpose in business is not new.

In 1936, John Maynard Keynes had already written in his book The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money that "If human nature felt no temptation to take a chance, no satisfaction (profit apart) in constructing a factory, a railway, a mine or a farm, there might not be much investment merely as a result of cold calculation," acknowledging, de facto, the existence of an intangible energy tightly bound with the goal of doing business.

In 1994, about sixty years later, purpose started being considered a relevant component in management literature. In their article in the Harvard Business Review, Bartlett & Ghoshal declared that the reason an organization exists is "*purpose-not strategy*." This marked the beginning of a new era of research around the intangible dimension of the organization.

Throughout the last twenty years, the "purpose talk" has become one of the most common in management. In 2018, the CEO of BlackRock in his yearly letter to shareholders acknowledged that "Society is demanding that companies, both public and private, serve a social purpose." This generated a snowball effect for the dissemination of the topic. In the same year, The Association of National Advertisers (ANA) awarded "Brand Purpose" as 2018's Marketing Word of the Year, and a majority of leading management consultancies published papers on the subject.

The more recent works by the U.S. Business Roundtable (2019, 2020) and the World Economic Forum (2020) contributed to expand the debate by reaching the civil society level.

To give an idea, in the Harvard Business Review database, the amount of purpose-related published articles in the last two years alone (2020-2022) results in more than 30% of the total ever published.

All these elements might sound strong enough to demonstrate the relevance of the topic in today's world. They might be reassuring enough to introduce the brilliant intuition Luca Leonardini had in creating a model that helps in the process of defining one's purpose. "*Codify Your Purpose*" is in fact a practical guide for every entrepreneur, manager, freelancer, and anyone willing to explore their own world, prioritize their beliefs, and make a global impact.

Looking at our world today in October 2022, what we are living is nothing but shocking. As we enter the phase Peter Hinssen defines as the Never Normal world, it may be difficult to think that "purpose" in corporate strategy matters, but, in truth, it is crucial.

The Ukraine crisis is revealing the nature of a conflict between ideologies, of ways of understanding the world and its future. In the meantime, the international situation is characterized by economic and social instability with repercussions on the most diverse spheres. We assist to the rise of anthropological questions about the role of economic agents and businesses, especially the ones trading in public markets.

So, what happens as the world's scenario becomes progressively more complex, uncertain, and ambiguous?

We find ourselves in a labyrinth, following Borges' thought, and it is very difficult to extricate oneself from a labyrinth when in it. All the elements and constant information we receive are pushing us to react under a short-term perspective, however, a new perspective is needed; allowing us to zoom out, to widen our gaze, and start imagining the future again.

While Levitt's idea of global markets seems today to clash with reality–and thus the logic of globalization with markets and business being the glue between peoples and nations–on the other hand, one can say that Levitt's perspective is also getting reinforced. Markets are the results of constant interactions between people, emerging from new needs and the creation of new relationships.

As I write, there are many demonstrations of opposition to the war.

This is happening in Russia, where they are often met with violence, but also in the Western countries, standing in opposition to more interventionist positions and aligned with the opinions of the Vatican State and the Pope himself.

This is a sign of vitality and health, a spark of light in the Never Normal world. It is not possible, and certainly not desirable, to imagine a binary future society in which there are only polarized scenarios.

We must aim for plurality and dialogue and not get used to situations that do not build what is good for mankind.

Different positions will be increasingly visible through decentralized or participatory media and technologies.

This will ensure participation and, above all, in the choices of which leaders to follow, which values to support and-of coursewhich economic logic to follow. It is here that we will be able to put purpose back at the center, with all its strength within the market.

Abelal and Tedlow's idea that markets are an important part of what companies create is truer today than ever before.

Take the case of the role that large technology companies Google and Apple have played in contributing their technologies to fight the exponential spread of COVID-19.

Take the case of Patagonia, Yvon Chouinard's company that has always been dedicated to creating recycled or low-impact products and which claims to have the planet as its only shareholder.

Take Airbnb's commitment to providing accommodation and shelter to migrants during various humanitarian emergencies; from environmental, such as Hurricane Matthew in Florida, to those caused by war, such as in Afghanistan in 2021 and Ukraine today.

These decisions are not solely about business, but about why the company itself exists and its contribution here and now to mankind.

The truth is that in the Never Normal world, business and society are even more interdependent than before and it has been demonstrated that one cannot prosper without the other.

The more we progress in time, the more the key question about our values and purpose matter. Who do we want to be? Which role do we want to play in this world as entrepreneurs, managers, freelancers, and-most importantly-human beings?

Through discovering our meaning, we become builders of opportunities and magnets: magnets of business, of markets, and ultimately of people.

Purpose is the ultimate powerful and disruptive energy that provides confidence in ourselves and our abilities to build something good; the courage to build the future itself.

Leonardini's experience collected in this book can play an important role. It is the result of three years of his hard work on the topic of Massive Transformative Purpose for the Exponential Organizations, which soon turned into the creation of the Purpose-Driven Academy, and serves as an uplifting, universal project. I believe "*Codify Your Purpose*" can help stimulate personal and societal growth on such a fundamental topic.

Finally, I would like to conclude with the words from Cardinal Vincent Nichols who, in September 2012, addressed the Blueprint for Better Business conference in London and clarified the role for each of us in designing a better future. "The deepest resources for the transformation of business, as for society as a whole, lie within the human heart. It is there we have to seek what it is we truly value and yearn for, and where we can harness the strongest motivation to change–our- selves, our organizations, and our world–for the better."

My wish is that this work from Luca Leonardini will be helpful in your journey to do just that.

**Francesco Derchi**, Strategist and Adjunct Professor at EHL Hospitality Business School

# FOREWORD

We live in an extraordinary era in which the great pillars that have sustained the economy of the 20th century are being strongly challenged.

Think of the ultimate reason why organizations and businesses exist at the role of the shareholders, the interest of actors outside the business, the very idea of progress and–lastly–at the future of the capitalism. It is a fascinating era because we are all called to answer and shape our economic and social communities. I believe that this activity cannot be separated from the centrality of purpose.

This book is an invaluable resource to help each of us better understand the role of purpose, both in the organization and in our lives.

"There is no favorable wind for the sailor who does not know where to go." Seneca, 2,000 years ago, warned sailors against setting out; that without a point of reference even the best wind would not help them. Thinking today about purpose, even in a context as circumscribed as the economy, means starting with Seneca's very words.

In recent years, management has focused a great deal on the theme of purpose. In its extreme summary, it represents the underlying reason for a company's existence, or, from another point of view, it represents what the world would lose if tomorrow a specific organization (profit or nonprofit) disappeared from the market.

While this book applies to a worldwide audience, Italy has always had a special and extraordinary connection with purpose and the identity of organizations in general.

If you are familiar, think of the insights of Adriano Olivetti, Enrico Mattei, and Michele Ferrero to name but a few among the many that Italy has seen in the postwar period.

Purpose lies at the intersection of who you are at your best and the role in the world you are destined to play. It stems from your ethos. It is married to your aspirations and because it is ethical, it is also timeless.

Purpose falls only partially within the playing field of traditional corporate marketing tools (such as vision, mission, and strategy). If a company's vision answers the question "Where are we going?" and mission the question "What are we doing?" purpose digs deeper.

Both mission and vision are important business drivers, but they play a different role than purpose. Mission and vision change with leadership, business contacts, mergers and acquisitions, and the competitive landscape. They are important, but also temporary. In our experience, they often have a time horizon of three to five years.

If well-articulated, purpose is specifically about a company's DNA and, for that very reason, does not follow the CEO cycle. Much less is it an expression of shareholders or the Board of Directors. If management passes, the purpose-ideally-remains in all its extraordinary effectiveness.

If this is true, the purpose represents the first ally of any organization; it points the way forward and vibrantly expresses the underlying reason why an organization came into being.

This is another reason why, rather than writing the purpose, it is preferable to speak of its discovery or rediscovery. In management, a growing body of literature has confirmed how so-called 'purpose-driven' companies perform better than their competitors. The benefits are many and some are seemingly surprising.

They range from the degree of employee satisfaction and involvement to the success rate of more complex strategic initiatives such as: major transformations, mergers and acquisitions, business expansions and diversifications, consumer relations, supplier relations, and the effectiveness of stakeholder management activities.

When purpose is treated as an existential intention, it can characterize every decision and process, underlying the operating system of an organization.

This enables faster navigation by defining potential benefits, such as a better and more coherent strategy, a more passionate and engaged employee community, much stronger customer loyalty, and uncommon proximity to external suppliers and partners.

"Codify Your Purpose" pushes the boundaries beyond the classical view of the economy and organizations. It offers an intimate path for the idea of purpose, a guide for personal discovery, and for some unexpected consequences. May it prove as valuable to you as it has to me.

Francesco Guidara, Managing Director BrightHouse Italy, East Mediterranean & Caspian

## INTRODUCTION

My passion for purpose is rooted in my history as an entrepreneur. I've been a board member and shareholder of three companies, two of which are still operational (one in Brussels and one in Milan).

My work with the third company made me aware of the huge impact that individual and company purpose can have on people's lives.

In 2010, I was in Verona helping to sell a complex and expensive German software platform that streamlined communication processes in large companies.

I was skilled in databases, technology, and publishing software, and an excellent technical consultant. But during this transaction, I overlooked one critical detail.

I wasn't just selling a piece of advanced technology, but a tool that would impact the way people work.

I was unaware that I was selling a cultural transformation tool, but my stakeholders weren't interested in changing the way they worked. You can guess how this story ended.

However, this same tool had been used successfully in many other countries. Initially, I believed it didn't work for this company because of the Italian entrepreneurial mindset.

But as I worked on more international projects, I realized that mindset and culture misalignment wasn't just a thing in Italy. It was a problem around the world.

According to research by Gallup, 60% of people feel emotionally detached at work, 19% of people feel miserable, and 75% of new

businesses fail in the first 5 years. These data made it clear to me that the way people do and live business had to be rethought. I realized that the foundation for building a better world and a safer future for all is based on our ability to reinvent business – and that purpose is the key to this realignment.

Since then, I've worked on cultural transformation projects at every level, including with young people. For five years, I taught innovation strategies at an institute in Milan for postgraduates in communication.

During those years, and after attending a course at Carlos and Laurence's Happy Startup School in Brighton and studying Salim Ismail's book "*Exponential Organizations*", I became passionate about purpose. I embarked on a journey to discover my purpose through intense research and application. In the following pages, I share what I learned.

From my daily practice with entrepreneurs, I know how little emphasis they place on purpose relative to its importance.

Purpose is still largely simplified, misunderstood, or ignored within companies because cultural transformation scares people much more than technological transformation.

Similarly, the notion of finding purpose makes people uncomfortable. They feel they already have one or don't need one. This is a legitimate reaction rooted in the way our brain works.

Over the past 5-6 years, attention to purpose has been growing steadily and attracting interest in online and offline media, leading universities, and prestigious scientific publications.

There are a lot of books about purpose. Why another book? Where this book seeks to be different is to take a more explanatory and interactive format to link individual and corporate purpose. As you will discover, it helps us understand the importance of authentic personal purpose as foundational to authentic corporate purpose.

I wrote this book to help as many people as possible take the first step on this extraordinary journey of empowerment. People need simple tools and clear paths like the ones I describe on these pages.

Purpose should always drive cultural transformation. For me, this reflection led to a question that inspired the book you're reading.

Entrepreneurs, intrapreneurs, and business owners are, first and foremost, individuals. They can be puzzled when talking about their purpose, and not unreasonably so.

If they have no idea what the purpose is or what it's for, how can we expect them to identify one for their companies?

The answer is: they can't. If they don't learn how to codify their purpose, they'll miss the opportunity to appreciate its awesome power to unleash potential in their organizations.

In fact, if you ask most business owners, "What is your purpose?" or "What is your company's purpose?" you'll confuse almost all of them. They won't know what to say.

There are at least two good reasons why their reaction is natural and legitimate.

First, most of them have simply forgotten to think about their purpose. Many aren't aware they have one or don't see the difference between individual and corporate purpose. Others simply don't realize what purpose is, what it's for, or that having one is necessary.

The second reason is that purpose has to do with feelings, emotions, and beliefs controlled by the part of the brain that doesn't control language.

You might remember Simon Sinek's epic TED Talk about the Golden Circle: in it, he explains that it's hard to find words to define what we feel deeply because language and feelings are controlled by separate parts of the brain.

So it's hard to define your purpose. But once you do, you'll naturally feel the need to align your individual and organizational purposes.

Only then will you fully appreciate and understand the power of purpose in an organization.

I want to help people understand that codifying their individual purpose and identifying and enabling their company's purpose are three steps in a natural "one-way-only" sequence. The steps are:

- 1. Codifying one's individual purpose.
- Identifying the company's purpose with a group or a team. (Described in the next book, for organizations).
- 3. Activating, spreading, and enabling the purpose within the organization.



If you're an entrepreneur or intrapreneur, this book will help you take the first step in learning how to build a future-proof, purpose-driven project.

The paths and the tools you use to codify your individual purpose and identify an organizational purpose are similar.

The main difference between them is that the first is the result of a personal, intimate, introspective journey.

Identifying corporate purpose involves a group of people or executive team (in companies with a structured organization) working with the *Purpose-Driven Business Canvas*. This will be the topic of a second book.

Passion (Problem)	Purpose (Scope)	Motivation (Why)	Vision (Impact)	Mission (Value)
What's the problem or the just cause that you are passionate about and that you want to transform in a business opportunity to make the world a better place?	What's the impossible dream you want your project to achieve? or: What does your project aspire to become in the next 10-20 years?	What does the project achieve through its purpose?	What will be the impact in the world if in the next 20 years the project will achieve its purpose?	What kind of value does the purpose of your project create in the world, through its daily activities?
Manifesto of your pu	rpose-driven project:			

Lastly, corporate purpose is activated, spread, and enabled in the organization through an iterative and collaborative process that involves the entire company working with the purpose-driven business framework. It's the third level of the natural sequence and is where **culture becomes a business process**.



### About this book

The book is designed to offer a lean, diversified learning experience with readings, videos, activities, and reflections that guide readers on a journey to codify their individual purpose.

- Light blue highlights "VIDEO BREAK" and "SPECIAL READING" points with QR codes that open links to videos about a specific topic. They provide the reader with valuable information that can enrich their experience and accelerate the learning process.
- 2. Yellow highlights identify quotes or particularly interesting concepts.
- 3. Light orange highlights are suggestions and bits of advice on how to continue with your reflection and activity work.
- 4. Dotted lines provide the reader with writing space.

The A4 format was chosen intentionally to leave plenty of white space on pages so readers can take notes or jot down ideas as they read and think.

### How is the book structured?

The book is divided into three parts.

The first part, "DEFINING AND EXPLORING PURPOSE", includes chapters 1 to 4. Besides providing a broad view of purpose, it answers questions such as "What's is purpose?", "Why is it so important?", "Do I need one?" and "What do I need to know before starting this journey?"

Part Two, "**Building your PURPOSE**", includes chapters 5 to 10 and outlines the practical knowledge you need to codify the first draft of your purpose. This section discusses values identification, the passion-problem connection, the IKIGAI, and the components and characteristics of a good purpose statement. It also contains exercises, reflections, videos, and articles that prepare you for the final section.

Part Three, "WHAT HAPPENS NEXT", provides tips on the lessons learned during your journey. It also describes the crucial "rinse and repeat" approach and answers the question "How do you know when you've found a good purpose?"

This last section also provides a list of books that inspired me to write this one, and a worksheet with exercises.

### How to get the best out of this book?

Read the text in one sitting. It will take about 45 minutes. Scan the QR codes to watch the videos and read the articles. Then start with the first round of exercises at the end of the book.

After you're done, you'll have a first draft of your purpose statement. I guarantee it!

To refine your draft, repeat the process outlined in chapters 5 to 10 as often as you want.

This process works well if you're willing to put in the work and apply the "rinse and repeat" approach until you feel your purpose statement is right.

There are no shortcuts to finding and codifying your purpose. That's why I suggest that you embark on this journey with a beginner's mindset and a warrior spirit.

### Ready for the challenge? Let's get started!

Part One

# DEFINING AND EXPLORING PURPOSE

Understanding purpose and the importance of this amazing empowering inner journey.

This part of the book is designed to provide a broad view of purpose and the positive impact of finding yours.

Your search for individual purpose is a personal transformation journey that ultimately helps you engage with and see work in a completely different way: as a path towards fulfilling your purpose. Reshaping the future begins with individual choices and actions. This is why purpose is key to unlocking this opportunity. It is core to realignment.

I love this quote from "The Heart of Business" by Hubert Joly:

"Work can be part of our search for meaning and our fulfillment as human beings. If we each shift the way we consider the nature of work, from a burden to an opportunity, then we can start transforming business."

# 1. WHAT IS PURPOSE?

Purpose gives you the energy and courage to do something you profoundly care about and are willing to devote yourself entirely to achieving.

It reflects a meaningful problem you want to solve. When aligned with your fundamental values, purpose is transformational. It helps you create opportunities to improve people's lives and make the world a better place.

It becomes the North Star that guides you, the compass that helps you find direction during tough times, and provides an immediate check on actions that are inconsistent with what you believe.

Your purpose lies at the intersection of who you are at your best and the role you're meant to play in the world.

As you'll discover in Chapters 7 and 8, purpose incorporates your aspiration to address external needs in the world that you're willing and able to act on using either your natural talents or capabilities you can develop.

In the dictionary, "purpose" has different definitions. "Purpose is the reason for which something exists or gets done." It "expresses the reason for being." Most importantly, purpose is "the intentionality and the determination" to achieve a declared goal.

Many people think purpose statements all look and sound alike. This is true, and there's nothing wrong with it.

Purposes are personal statements of intention to make a positive impact on the community.

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I didn't just read these books. I loved them.

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- 2. Enter the Purpose-Driven Academy server.
- 3. Introduce yourself and share a readable screenshot or the link to your review.

### IF YOU WANT TO TAKE YOUR FIRST BRAVE STEPS TOWARDS FINDING MEANING AND PURPOSE IN YOUR LIFE AND WORK, THIS BOOK IS A GREAT PLACE TO START.

BERNADETTE JIWA, Founder of Story Republic and Creator of the Story Skills Workshop

### REMEMBER WHY YOU STARTED. LUCA HELPS YOU REIGNITE THAT FIRE WITHIN TO CONNECT PURPOSE TO INTENT TO OUTCOMES. YOU CAN'T CHANGE THE WORLD UNTIL YOU CHANGE YOURSELF.

BRIAN SOLIS, Futurist, Author of LifeSCALE: How to Live a More Creative, Productive, and Happy Life

Why should you bother finding and codifying your purpose?

Because people who are connected to their purpose experience more meaningful relationships, better health, and career advancement. Who doesn't want that?

In recent times, attention to purpose has been growing steadily and attracting interest in online and offline media, leading universities, and prestigious scientific publications.

There are a lot of books about purpose. Why another book? Where this book seeks to be different is to take a more exploratory and interactive format, to link personal and corporate purpose. As you will discover, it helps us understand the importance of authentic personal purpose as foundational to authentic corporate purpose.

Many people no longer remember their purpose. Others don't feel they need one. Others think "purpose" is just a slogan, while still others have no idea what it is or what it's for.

But if entrepreneurs or intrapreneurs have no idea what their purpose is, how will they ever understand its value? How will they apply or enable purpose within their organizations?

The simple answer is, they can't. It's impossible to do unless they codify their individual purpose first. Helping people clarify their individual purpose – and, by extension, identifying and enabling their company's purpose – involves three different steps in a natural sequence.

Luca Leonardini's intention is to help as many people as possible to take their first step on what will hopefully become an extraordinary journey of empowerment and self-discovery.

The author has shared his experience and the simple tools he used on his discovery journey so you can also begin that journey and codify your purpose.



Luca Leonardini is an Italian-Belgian entrepreneur, board member, advisor, and founding partner. He's also an innovation coach, author, and TEDx organizer.

Luca has been a visiting lecturer at the Faculty of Economics and Management of the University of Ferrara and at the Faculty of Architecture of Sapienza University of Rome. His work on cultural and digital transformation and new organizational models has been featured in numerous student theses on economics, innovation management, and communication at the Universities of Verona, Ferrara, and Bolzano.

He founded the Purpose-Driven Academy to accelerate business mindset change globally.