

The image features two white sailboats with large sails racing on a deep blue sea. The boats are leaving white wakes behind them. A large, solid yellow triangle is positioned on the right side of the image, partially overlapping the sea and the text. The text is white and bold, set against the yellow background.

# Embracing change

Working together for  
a sustainable future

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COVID-19 has changed everything. Not least accelerating the impetus for achieving a healthier, more sustainable world. We stand on the edge of unexpected opportunity – but if we revert to ‘business as usual’, the moment will pass.

Will we dare to take our chance to change – or blow it?

Finding a way through requires more than bluster and a naïve belief that everything will work out alright in the end. Good intentions can drift away once real life gets in the way.

As both employers and providers of products and services to society, businesses have a crucial role to play in this. But they cannot work in isolation. They need to forge coalitions with authorities, NGOs and other businesses if significant change is to happen. Multiple voices and minds need to be brought together around a higher purpose that all can agree upon. **Then real change can happen.**

In bringing organisations together, we also encourage them to work in new ways to enable change.



**Read about five ways in which we help them work differently.**





## 1. Talk to your enemies

Enemies seems a strong word to use, but it often reflects how we think – that others with an opposing viewpoint must be defeated and made to think like us. Frequently both have the same goal in mind but lose sight of it, wasting effort arguing about other things.

### What we often see

- A polarised environment where shouting loud seems to matter more than trying to understand
- Entrenched viewpoints that get you nowhere fast – apart from a dead end
- Social media has enabled and amplified this trend
- Common ground usually does exist – but it requires skill and care to find it.

### How we can help

- We reach out to unlikely stakeholders and bedfellows to gain their view and seek safe areas and joint initiatives for discussion
- We help leaders build broader thinking for a better world into their organisational purpose and culture - despite sometimes encountering resistance
- We develop creative communication tools to gain understanding from sceptical audiences.

Pulse has worked with high profile NGOs, environmental bodies and energy companies to establish common frameworks to tackle the climate crisis. Some of these have never been in the same room together before.

Awkward conversations, differing standpoints and mutual suspicion have gradually been replaced by a shared sense of purpose as we tackle the greatest challenge of our generation.

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## 2. Don't be shy

When you feel that the world is against you and despair at what people think you do, it can seem easier to keep your head below the parapet and just get on with things quietly. But feeling vulnerable hampers innovation and the ability to think and operate clearly.

### What we often see

- Virtue signalling has become rampant, with little depth, compassion or context behind the positions taken
- Consequently, many businesses and individuals are disinclined to talk publicly about their work for fear of criticism by others
- As a result, many of the positive impacts on society brought about by these organisations are underreported or ignored.

### How we can help

- We encourage business leaders to get behind the purpose of how their organisation contributes to the world in different ways
- We help those leaders to lead with courage and conviction
- We use an organisation's purpose alongside the UN Sustainable Development Goals to align action with meaningful impact.

Sectors like fossil fuels and private equity are constantly under attack in the court of public opinion. This can lead to a lack of confidence and openness about some of the positive societal impacts of their operations. Those working in sectors like these are often demoralised and lacking in confidence.

We help such organisations to become more confident in explaining their wider role in society.

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## 3. Keep it simple

In a world of limitless information and channels to disseminate it, it is frustrating that the important work of scientists and other experts is often ignored or wilfully manipulated to suit narrow ideological or political interest. But we also have to recognise that sometimes scientists do not help themselves, and potentially misunderstand the impact of their words on the wider world.

### What we often see

- For many people, the language of science is hard to grasp
- What matters to a scientist may have little relevance to a broader audience
- Doubt and uncertainty are part of scientific process – but worry the wider world
- Detail and jargon – frequently found in scientific texts – are the enemies of comprehension.

### How we can help

- We make complex scientific and engineering concepts understandable and relevant to all audiences
- We listen closely, understanding what matters – and crucially, what doesn't
- Then we find unusual, memorable, creative ways to get the message across.

We don't set boundaries in how we explain things. For example, pieces of rock, metre-long leaflets, digital portals and tablecloths have all been used by Pulse to explain simply the science behind energy and carbon dioxide capture and storage.

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## 4. Use a wide-angle lens

Too many attempts at change start from the wrong place or are driven by a narrow worldview. We know there is value in seeing things from multiple perspectives.

### What we often see

- Pre-conceived ideas and opinions skew outcomes
- Competing interests get in the way of a full discussion and debate about what is needed
- There is often a lack of rigour around understanding the issue, and setting realistic objectives and outcomes.

### How we can help

- We think at a whole systems level and draw upon multiple perspectives
- We don't pre-judge, and we encourage others to do likewise
- We insist upon clarity of thought in defining what we aim to achieve.

Over the years, Pulse has worked with many organisations, helping them to see the bigger picture, resolve their purpose as a positive force within society and communicate it.

We have helped UNESCO to showcase food sustainability; Moneyline to promote responsible financial support; Artraker to visualise the impact of conflict; The Queen's Anniversary Prizes to share the outstanding work of UK colleges and universities; Rumaila to put the future of Iraq at its heart; and Aureos to share its support for emerging economies.

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[AUREOS >](#)

[QUEEN'S ANNIVERSARY PRIZES >](#)

## 5. Build trust from the inside out

The influence of workforces has arguably never been stronger. Employees are more engaged, more demanding and potentially less loyal than ever before. Organisations have to get it just right to ensure they retain a thriving work environment. If they *do* get it right, they can really reap the benefits.

### What we see

- Individuals and teams not fully leveraged by leadership
- Younger generations not truly energised by traditional corporate ethos/values – likely to be exacerbated by post-COVID working from home trend
- Engagement with external audiences can be transformed through unleashing the passion and talent of the workforce.

### How we can help

- We help leaders understand the higher purpose of their organisation in building a better world
- We help them bring their teams with them on a journey that ultimately reaches out to and engage all stakeholders.

Pulse has worked over many years with leaders from across business and social enterprise, helping them identify what lies at the heart of their organisation and how they personally can catalyse change. By working with colleagues at all levels, they are able to achieve their aims and have transformed relationships inside and outside the organisation.

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[RUMAILA/BP EMPLOYEE NEWSPAPERS >](#)

[MONEYLINE >](#)



## Two decades of helping organisations transform

From energy to environmental technology, social enterprises to emerging market private equity; from start-ups to international agencies to multinationals: Pulse has 20 years of experience in helping organisations transform.

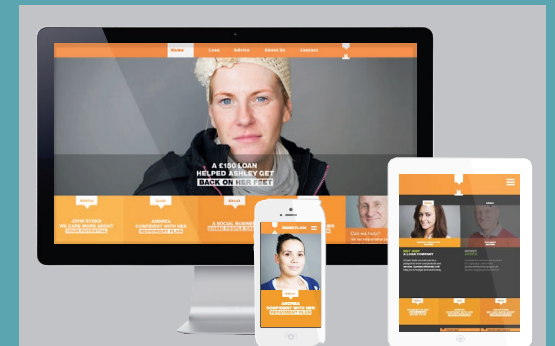
As pioneers in helping to build purposeful organisations, we bring organisations and individuals together: to help them identify a common, higher purpose; to build understanding and resolve complex situations; to identify and embed purpose through workforces and out to external stakeholders; and to bring this to life with creative communication and engagement.

### Pulse clients include:

Abcam	M&G Investments
Artraker	Moneyline
Arup	Permira
Aureos Capital	OKI
BP	Rumaila
CO <sub>2</sub> Capture Project	Schroders
Digital+	Social Business Trust
Inverleith	The Royal Anniversary Trust
Jaguar	Thomson Reuters
Mazars	UNESCO



Clockwise from top left:  
BP Carbon Capture and Storage  
Moneyline



Rumaila  
BP Oman

UNESCO  
Purpose Masterclass for business leaders





Pulse is part of the B Corp business community. B Corp businesses are organisations that are focused on delivering their purpose with profit.

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<https://bcorporation.uk/>

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