How can information sharing with internal stakeholders help guide a company’s overall sustainability strategy and environmental and social performance?

❖ Broadcasting company values and ethics creates attention and urgency on sustainability topics and initiatives.

Information sharing “pushes the conversation towards what we need to do and what we want to say – it pushes the strategy forward and creates urgency around it…” – interview respondent 1

❖ Internal sustainability reporting can help to attract and retain employees with strong sustainability values.

2016 Cone Communications Millennial Employee Engagement study:
❖ 64% of millennials won’t take a job if their employer doesn’t have a strong CSR policy
❖ 83% would be more loyal to a company that helps them contribute to social and environmental issues

❖ Collecting and communicating sustainability information can encourage innovation within a company (fig 2).

Seeing and sharing the data helps you to “[identify] those strengths and weaknesses so you can reallocate resources and maybe think through your strategy in a different way for specific initiatives within CSR…” – interview respondent 4

❖ Sharing sustainability information internally will create an enhanced level of accountability to all of a company’s stakeholders – internal and external (fig 3).

❖ Sustainability information can be leveraged for both internal and external communication functions.

❖ Internal and external reporting are valuable processes that allow organizations to develop systems and capabilities that will give them greater insight into their sustainability strategy.

❖ For the value of internal reporting to reach full potential and effectively feed into decision making, strategy and performance, I recommend further research on:

❖ Type of content
❖ The frequency and consistency of information sharing
❖ Best practices for engagement and education on sustainability topics, and distribution of information

Results (continued)

Background

❖ Increasingly, businesses are implementing sustainability programs and are publishing annual reports to address their business risks, impacts, and opportunities that they are taking to improve (fig 1).

❖ There is much value in publicly disclosing sustainability information including the creation of accountability to external audiences and benchmarking with industry competitors but…

❖ There is a need to explore and understand how information sharing with internal business audiences can also help drive a company’s environmental and social strategy and performance.

Research Question

How can information sharing with internal stakeholders help guide a company’s overall sustainability strategy and environmental and social performance?

Internship & Methods

❖ Interned at Nordstrom on the Corporate Social Responsibility team where I consolidated common sustainability metrics in the retail industry and supported data collection for the 2020 public sustainability report.

❖ Reached out to 15 CSR professionals and conducted phone interviews with 4 of them about their opinions and expertise on sustainability reporting.

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Significance & Next Steps

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