

# Communications Watch

Communications Watch: CCO Reflections – Immediate Next Steps for Working Through the Pandemic Fog

February 24, 2022



# Some of the critical questions and issues we will be answering today

- Discovered outcomes from CCOs arising from the pandemic
- Matters of importance for CCOs
- Key learnings from 2 years in the extended pandemic
- Next steps for what CCOs are working on right now



# Today's Speakers



**Craig E. Carroll, PhD**  
**(Moderator)**  
Communications Leader,  
M&C Center  
**The Conference Board**



**Raymond C. Jordan**  
Founding Principal  
**Highland Insights LLC**

# The context for conducting the Corporate Communications Practices survey



OCR

The  
Observatory on  
Corporate Reputation, LLC

Researcher

THE CONFERENCE BOARD



Datahost

# Double-Blind

198 leading companies





# 93% faced employee burnout

75% among <1k employees



# 49% faced racial unrest







**37% faced loss of  
cultural memory**



**25% faced labor  
unrest**





# C-SUITE OUTLOOK 2022

## Reset and Reimagine

### Surviving and Thriving in a Uniquely Challenging Business Environment

Inflation, labor and supply upheavals, and a work culture transformation are top of mind for CEOs in 2022.

This is The Conference Board's 23rd annual survey of business leaders around the world.

Which trends are transient, and which will endure?



Download the full report:  
[www.conferenceboard.org/csuiteoutlook](http://www.conferenceboard.org/csuiteoutlook)



# High-impact issues and top priorities for CEOs in 2022

Select the **external factors** that you think will have the greatest impact on your business next year.

## HIGH IMPACT

- COVID-19 disruptions
- Rising inflation
- Labor shortages
- Supply chain disruptions
- Changes in consumer behavior

## LOW IMPACT

- Corporate debt levels
- Vaccine availability
- Future of cities
- Cryptocurrencies
- Shareholder activism

Select the **internal issues** your company will focus on in the coming year.

## HIGH FOCUS

- Attract and retain talent
- Accelerate digital transformation
- Improve cash flow
- Develop “Next Gen” leaders
- Modify business model

## LOW FOCUS

- Revisit mission and/or purpose
- Pay down debt
- Prepare for rising interest rates
- Decentralize decision making
- Significantly change capital allocation priorities

Note: 917 CEOs responded globally.  
Source: The Conference Board® C-Suite Outlook 2022





## Audience Poll

What external factors do you think will have the greatest impact on your business?





Audience Poll  
What internal issues will  
your company be focusing on the *most*?



# New matters of importance





**Having a growth,  
rather than fixed,  
mindset**



# The criticality of strong empathic leadership



The image shows the silhouettes of several business professionals in a modern office setting. They are positioned in front of large windows that offer a view of a city skyline during a sunset or sunrise. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue. The office floor is highly reflective, mirroring the silhouettes of the people and the light from the windows. The overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

**Sustained, regular,  
personal communication  
with the team**





# The centrality of the company's mission and purpose



# The criticality of strong empathic leadership



# The relevance and resonance of stakeholder capitalism



# The value of cross-functional teams



**Forced prioritization,  
a focus on impact,  
and needle-moving  
opportunities**





# Audience Poll Question

# Ramping up business plans still in infancy









# Restarting messaging relative to international travel markets



# Imagining the Post-COVID world (Pioneering what's next)





# Preparing for new return-to-office realities





# Telling post-pandemic story with fresh narratives

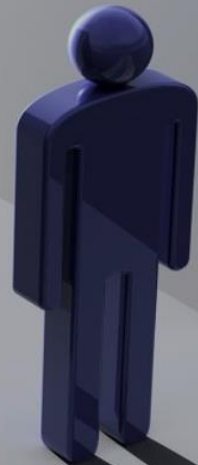




# Continuing to learn the business



**56% challenged  
by metrics to  
evaluate  
agencies**





# New forms of measurement (business value beyond reputation)





# Digital transformation



# Advancing CSR strategy and positioning





**Navigating questions  
about supply chain, staff  
shortages, and inflation**



A person is shown from the chest down, sitting at a wooden desk. They are wearing a dark jacket. In their right hand, they hold a smartphone. In their left hand, they hold a pen over an open notebook. A laptop is open in front of them, and a tablet is also visible on the desk. The background is slightly blurred, showing a white wall and a wooden cabinet.

# Identifying new corporate comms channels beyond email for remote (offline) workers





# Customer, stakeholder, and user experience



# New ways of thinking of DEI



A photograph of three women in safety vests at a construction site. One woman in the foreground is wearing a high-visibility orange and yellow vest and is looking down at a clipboard. Another woman in the middle ground is wearing a grey jacket and holding a coffee cup. A third woman in the background is wearing a grey jacket and holding a coffee cup. They are standing in front of a large stack of shipping containers.

# Diversity within Supply Chain

**Thinking about making diversity a more important criterion**



A group of business professionals in a meeting, with hands raised in a gesture of discussion or agreement. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient and white text.

# Anticipating and preparing in case of workplace violence



# The Future of Work



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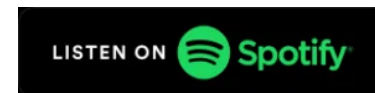


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