



TALENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

THE POWER OF SUSTAINABILITY
EXPERTISE FOR A WINNING
BUSINESS STRATEGY

PageExecutive **MichaelPage**

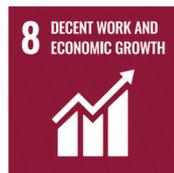
Part of PageGroup

THE POWER OF SUSTAINABILITY EXPERTISE FOR A WINNING BUSINESS STRATEGY

The UN's sustainable development agenda has prompted many companies, including PageGroup, to reflect on their approach to sustainability. The challenge can be framed in simple terms. How do you build a successful business while at the same time making the world a better, fairer, greener place?

At PageGroup, we aim to do this through sustainable growth. Growth where employees, candidates and clients remain front and centre, but importantly go hand-in-hand with the environment, social impact and a solid governance framework. We're still in the recruitment and talent solutions business, but we're putting sustainability at the heart of everything we do and helping our clients do the same.

This eBook is for companies that have decided to make sustainability an integral part of their business model and corporate culture. Read on to find out what sustainability is all about, and the new skills and roles organisations need to succeed.



WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

The UN Commission defines sustainable development as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. In business terms, it means balancing the pursuit of profit and market share with broader social, environmental and economic obligations. Sometimes referred to as people, planet and profits, these obligations are known as the three pillars of sustainability.

In 2015, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was signed. It included 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to eco-sustainability and resilience, human dignity, regional and global political stability and economic prosperity.

ENVIRONMENT



- CO2 emissions and climate change
- Population growth/urbanisation
- Biodiversity
- Lack of resources

How should a sustainable business enterprise approach Environment?

- Actions aimed at combating climate change
- Efficient use of natural resources and production factors
- Development of circular business models

SOCIAL



- Human rights
- Equal opportunities
- Health and security
- Working conditions and standards

How should a sustainable business enterprise approach Social?

- Enhancement of human capital
- Promotion of diversity
- Workers' safety measures
- Community impact assessments

GOVERNANCE



- Independence and diversity in Boards of Directors
- Business ethics
- Remuneration of Executive Committee and Board of Directors
- Shareholders' rights and tax policies

How should a sustainable business enterprise approach Governance?

- Ethical business practices
- Corporate transparency
- Accountability with external stakeholders

Every employee in a company can play a decisive role in achieving sustainability. However, they need a roadmap to guide them, with targets defined, tracked and measured transparently.

SUSTAINABILITY AS MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE

More and more companies are using the ESG categories to shape their business models and strategies. Enterprises that prioritise sustainability are best placed to attract both capital and talent. However, companies must do more than pay lip service to the green revolution. To be worthwhile, sustainability goals must be pervasive across all levels of the company. This requires skill and commitment on the part of senior figures.

One of the priorities of every company today should be to draw up its sustainability roadmap by setting itself credible and progressive goals so that the entire workforce feels involved in the process

Forward-thinking leaders regard sustainability as a personal responsibility as much as a corporate commitment. More and more Board Members, CEOs, DHRs and Marketing Directors feel a strong obligation to their staff and customers and strive to meet their expectations. They want to build a better, more sustainable world for future generations.

WHAT ARE THE MUST-HAVE SKILLS FOR THE LEADERS OF COMPANIES THAT WANT TO EMBRACE SUSTAINABILITY AND MAKE IT PART OF THEIR DNA?



PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP



INSPIRING



CONSENSUS BUILDING



SACRIFICE



Let's clarify a controversial aspect. There is no absolute rule. It depends on the situation. For example, the finance, human resources, marketing and communications sectors cannot be excluded from sustainability processes. Once the strategy has been defined, we recommend gradually adding managers with prior experience in the sector. Companies should also draw up a map that leads to a transversal organisational model in which sustainability affects all corporate functions

Fatih Cömert, Executive Director Michael Page Turkey

In reality, no single figure can drive a company's sustainability transformation. It needs concerted, all-round leadership.

WHAT ARE THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF A CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK?



DEFINITION OF A SHARED ROADMAP



DEFINITION OF AN ORGANISATIONAL MODEL



DEFINITION OF PRIORITIES AND GOALS



DEFINITION OF A DEDICATED BUDGET



ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS



CREATION AND PROMOTION OF A SUSTAINABLE CULTURE



The will of the shareholders is essential because it is they who decide the company's strategy and it is they who should drive sustainability. In family businesses, it is the family that should believe in sustainability. In other types of companies, it is important that there is a group of managers capable of wagering on such a challenging objective. A single individual is never enough to complete the process. An enthusiastic manager certainly helps and can make a difference, influencing stakeholders and bringing interesting projects to the table. But then it is the whole company that has to take up the challenge.

Fatih Cömert, Executive Director Michael Page Turkey

Like all major cultural and organisational changes that disrupt a company's DNA, sustainability initiatives depend primarily on management and governance.

In conclusion, sustainability relies on consensus and buy-in across the entire company. To achieve this, leaders need to communicate their objectives transparently, particularly when those objectives are shaped by information and processes that weren't an integral part of the business strategy until now.



THE NEW **SUSTAINABILITY PROFESSIONALS**

No single figure can lead sustainable transition in a company. There are, however, several different roles within an organisation that can contribute to the mission. Among them is an emerging profession: Head of ESG, whose responsibility is to drive the company's vision of sustainability.

HEAD OF ESG: THE EMERGING STRATEGIC PROFESSION

Head of ESG is a new, evolving role. As such, this figure's responsibilities aren't set in stone and will vary from company to company. Finding professionals with the right profile for this position is a challenge, which is one reason why recruitment companies like PageGroup are playing an ever-bigger role in the drive for corporate sustainability.

MAIN HEAD OF ESG **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Works alongside the CEO/MD, the BoD (Board of Directors) and the management team in defining the corporate sustainability strategy
- Works closely with senior management to make it easier to understand and integrate ESG factors in investment decisions, assessing both the risks and opportunities
- With their understanding of European, national and international regulatory frameworks, he or she improves current ESG policies and is responsible for data collection and reporting. Supports external communication with investors and stakeholders
- Maintains a constant dialogue with actors outside the company (public and private) to maintain the strategic positioning of the company image in terms of ESG
- Manages internal and external communication to raise awareness among the various stakeholders
- Keeps abreast of ESG trends and developments to translate them into improvements that can be implemented in the company's operations
- Organises company events, partnerships, collaborations and participates across a variety of social, environmental and humanitarian fields
- Oversees and organises the agendas of ESG committee meetings



KEY SOFT SKILLS FOR BECOMING A HEAD OF ESG

These are some of the characteristics that a Head of ESG should possess:

- A passion for sustainability, together with the conviction that the values it embodies are essential for business development
- Strategic vision of sustainable development at business level, but also financial, social/people and globalisation/inclusion level
- The standing needed to interact with interlocutors at high level (public/private), but at the same time flexibility to adapt to various social and cultural contexts
- Relational capacities in a multicultural and international environment
- Ability to influence and catalyse change to improve the company's ESG performance, creating opportunities to bring about meaningful change
- Excellent interpersonal skills for building fruitful relationships with colleagues and key stakeholders
- Practical/analytical approach to defining roadmaps and new business processes, as well as gathering useful information to achieve goals
- The ability to make important and sometimes difficult decisions under pressure
- Creativity and the ability to present innovative and forward-looking ideas and initiatives
- The ability to influence and inspire others using excellent communication skills

HEAD OF ESG TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

- New master's degree courses in major business and management schools
- International webinars
- Consultancy – b corps to have trend
- Professional associations

Training for the Head of ESG position is still evolving. Several institutions - including Bocconi University and the London Business School - have launched master's degrees, especially in the manufacturing sector, where sustainability is an issue with a strong impact on technological evolution and automation. Some sectors in this area are more advanced than others, such as the luxury, food or chemical-pharmaceutical industries.

Some companies have created sustainability hubs to influence the creation of a shared culture among stakeholders. Professionals interested in the Head of ESG career track can also participate in international webinars, attend meetings of relevant associations and read reports on the latest sustainability trend. In this evolving profession, "continuum" and self-learning are essential.

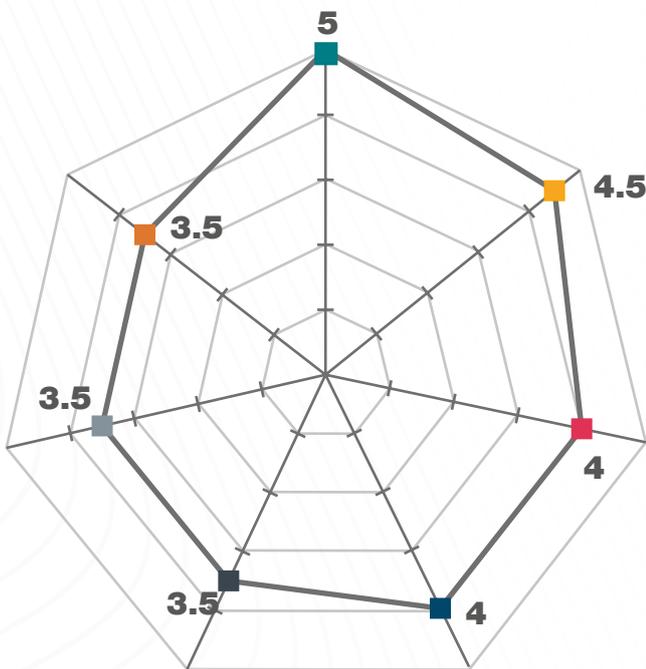
The positions' primary areas of responsibility involve working closely with investment teams and leadership to develop the best company-wide ESG policies and frameworks. The Head of ESG will work to minimise risk and maximise opportunities while interpreting the company's mission and vision in terms of sustainability.

HOW TO IDENTIFY NEW SUSTAINABILITY PROFESSIONALS

What expertise, areas of competence or concrete experience might a Head of ESG profile have? Although these profiles are constantly evolving, there are currently certain backgrounds that are in high demand and can be used to accurately identify a head of ESG.

We should clarify that, in order to provide an exact definition of a Head of ESG profile, we need to consider several parameters such as, for example, the size of the company, the positioning of the company in the market, the industry or sector in which it operates or the development objectives of the company. Depending on these parameters, the manager's approach to business development will be defined. This could be a profile that is more interested in strategy and business development, with concrete and operational activities, as opposed to a manager who is more focused on positioning the company in an institutional, associative or external communication environment

Some of these backgrounds are listed below, which have been given a score indicating the frequency of demand for such expertise, with a view to the future



Corporate affairs: Expertise that includes the management of relations between the company and various external stakeholders, such as national and local institutions, the European Union, sector associations, local authorities and NGOs. All corporate social responsibility projects are also considered under this heading;

Communication: This includes internal communication, which is key to creating and solidifying a sustainable and inclusive culture, as well as external communication and media relations management. This also includes brand positioning, event, partnership and sponsorship organisation in the field of sustainability;

Legal & compliance: This heading is meant to underline the importance of awareness of the regulatory framework in terms of sustainability and its possible evolution. This expertise, together with corporate affairs, allows for sound and sustainable corporate lobbying;

Strategy & Investments: A clear vision of a sustainable investment strategy is vital in order to make the ESG role more concrete and maximise its advisory value for the organisation's senior management (CEO, Board of Directors, investors and stakeholders);

People & Human Resources: Experience in the all-round management of the HR area could be the real added value of the Head of ESG profile, inasmuch as people are placed at the centre of the sustainable development project, as stakeholders and change-makers;

Environment, Health & Safety: Environment, health and safety could be areas through which to develop a successful career in ESG or Sustainability. These concepts can be considered the precursors of sustainable business and human capital management;

R&D e product development: Key responsibility for the strategic and technological development of companies in any sector, from industrial and consumer goods to healthcare and services. These specialists are not only in charge of the "product of the future", but they also play a key role as a trade union between the different areas of the company.

Identifying the most appropriate backgrounds and experiences for your company is a very important step in identifying a Head of ESG who can add value and make a difference. Each position has its own unique characteristics that sets it apart from the others, which best match the company's specific background and culture.

THE IMPACT OF SUSTAINABILITY ON COMPANY-WIDE ROLES

Besides Head of ESG, various other positions are evolving to drive sustainability initiatives. These new roles are most prominent in fields such as: Hydrogen, Carbon Capture, Storage, Biogas, Waste to Energy, Smart Mobility, Smart Solutions (city, building and home).



Sustainability challenges are transforming corporate structures in various sectors, with energy, chemicals and mobility among the most affected.

Fatih Cömert, Executive Director Michael Page Turkey

These are some of the key positions that are emerging in the era of corporate sustainability:

HEAD OF BUSINESS UNIT

Manager with an all-round view of the business, from a strategic-commercial to a financial and supply chain perspective.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Manager who brings broad technical experience and a strategic-innovative vision of specific products to be developed.

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Profile with a strategic vision on both the financial and commercial side. He's able to analyse different business plans and understand what the new opportunities for organic and inorganic growth of the company might be.

OPERATION PROJECT MANAGER

Profile who can implement operational efficiencies in new, fast-growing businesses, making them profitable and scalable.

HEAD OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Profiles specifically dedicated to the smart and business-friendly implementation of corporate D&I policies, often with international, multicultural backgrounds and global vision.

SUSTAINABILITY DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Cross-functional professionals engaged in implementing sustainability aspects in all (direct and indirect) processes of the company, from business and operations to employee culture and behaviour.

Clearly, not only are new managers being introduced as agents of change, but new professions are evolving.

The common denominator for all these professions is the ability to align with the sustainability mission as outlined by the Head of ESG.



GREATER EXPECTATIONS CALL FOR **ACTION AND INNOVATION**

Growing expectations from stakeholders, investors, policymakers and the public are prompting global industry to “go green” faster. Pandemic and global sustainability targets are also reinforcing this trend. Innovation is essential to acquire a clear vision of new leadership in a changing business environment.



At PageGroup, we promote cross-industry fertilisation and the creation of new leadership profiles that have a sustainable vision, industry experience and a growth mindset. That is why we are helping our candidates to be key players in future management while at the same time supporting clients in defining the skills needed to build a competitive leadership team. .

Fatih Cömert, Executive Director Michael Page Turkey



CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS AND STIMULATING PROSPECTS

Currently, many companies lack a coherent way to organise executive talent development under the framework of sustainability. There’s an urgent need to invest in innovative talent development programs with a sustainability perspective. One option is to partner with consulting firms that constantly analyse innovations and disruptions in the sustainability sector and who can leverage that knowledge to offer talent and recruitment solutions.



One of our objectives is to define the best possible configuration of our clients’ executive teams to create a sustainable and innovative business leadership. This is why PageGroup is developing an important managerial network with experience in the field of sustainability. .

Fatih Cömert, Executive Director Michael Page Turkey

PAGEGROUP’S **COMMITMENT**

When it comes to sustainability, PageGroup believes in leading by example. Within our own organisation, we are increasing transparency, promoting gender equality and providing better opportunities for professional development. The Group strives to minimise and mitigate its environmental footprint, demonstrating responsible business practices and good global citizenship.

At PageGroup, we’re passionate about helping organisations achieve their sustainability goals. Contact us today, and let’s talk about putting environment, social and governance at the heart of your business.

PageExecutive

Michael Page

Part of PageGroup