

A Personal Guide to Corporate Climate Action

“[Our focus on sustainability] has made us an absolute magnet for talent.”

- Alan Jope
CEO of Unilever

The Climate Challenge

Climate change is no longer a threat for the distant future – it is already impacting our society and economy, and it will pose growing challenges to many aspects of our lives. The good news is that it is not too late to make a difference. The change starts with YOU.

To avoid the worst impacts of climate change, we must rally action **now** from governments and companies to drive towards a **100% Clean Economy**.

Without sufficient action, we will face unimaginable crises – food and water scarcity, severe floods, large-scale climate migration, poor air quality and cascading economic disruptions.

We're at a crossroads, but effective climate action can stimulate technology innovation, create more sustainable jobs, support environmental justice and bring about the change we need.

How Can The Private Sector Be A Part Of The Solution?

Voices for Change

Leading the transition to net zero emissions by 2050 is the **new business imperative**. The decisions that companies and investors make today matter to our communities and our economy – not just tomorrow but also in the decades ahead.

Companies can turn the tide on climate change in four ways:



Commit: Set the ambitious, net zero emissions goal and transition plan that the world needs



Collaborate: Collaborate with strategic partners to drive change and increase impact



Invest: Accelerate investment, innovation and technology deployment



Advocate: Pursue an ambitious, science-based climate policy agenda

In addition to ambitious targets, strategic collaborations and technological innovations, companies should be using the most powerful tool they have to fight climate change: **their political influence**.



How Can You Boost Companies' Ambition To Get Real On Climate?

YOUR POWER

A company's most important asset is their **people**. You can make your voice heard to make sure companies know that tomorrow's talent cares about climate. You can continue to make your voice heard as an employee.

If business leaders believe that acting on climate change is required to compete for **Talent** and to manage **Reputational** and **Business Risk**, then they will do so. Stronger business leadership and advocacy on Capitol Hill will help shape and accelerate the public policies needed to achieve a net zero future.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN CHOOSING WHERE TO WORK

- Has the organization made public and tangible commitments to address climate change? Do these science-based targets include defined timelines?
- Is the company actively supporting public policies to address climate change and achieve net zero emissions?
- Is the company a member of trade associations that oppose climate policies and regulations (e.g., American Petroleum Institute, National Association of Manufacturers)? If so, is the company using its influence to improve the trade association's positions?
- How does the company empower employees to fight climate change and voice concerns?

QUESTIONS YOU COULD ASK COMPANY REPS

- What are you doing to support government policies that limit carbon pollution across the economy and cut emissions in your sector (e.g., what are your company's lobbying policies)?
- Do you allocate resources to support climate action and policy advocacy?
- Are your trade association's climate policy agendas in line with your agenda and values?
- How else are you engaged in fighting climate change (e.g., innovation in green technology)?
- How do you empower employees to fight climate change?

WHEN YOU COULD ASK CLIMATE QUESTIONS

- **Information sessions** on campus (or virtually) provide an opportunity to ask general questions about the company, including if they have a climate action plan.
- **Interviews** are a two-way street, and interviewers want to learn what issues potential recruits care about.
- **After receiving an offer** is a critical time to decide whether to take a new job; companies are eager to have you join, and the questions you ask have the power to influence corporate behavior and make a difference for good!
- **As an employee** you will have the power to continue to push boundaries and act as a change agent, fighting for the cause you believe in.

Ensure That Your Voice Is Heard.

“My students today are more likely to focus on a business's impact on the environment or society at large, and to insist that companies have a positive social mission.”

– Rebecca M. Henderson
Professor, Harvard Business School



RESOURCES

Here are some places where you can learn more about corporate sustainability:

- [Climate Authenticity Meter](#)
- [InfluenceMap](#)
- [Science Based Targets](#)
- [RE100](#)
- [Just Capital](#)

