

Awareness-raising questionnaire



An initiative of the European Commission
Directorate-General for Enterprise

1. Introduction

This questionnaire will help you think about your company's efforts towards responsible entrepreneurship by raising questions on the possible ways you could improve your business in a profitable and sensible manner. The questionnaire will also help you identify further actions you can take to strengthen your business, its reputation and performance.

The questionnaire should take no more than ten minutes to complete. Tick the most appropriate responses for you and your enterprise, since it is for your own use. There are no right or wrong answers – rather the questions should prompt consideration of actions you can take. Once complete, it is yours to keep for future reference. It is not to be submitted to or collected by the event organisers.

2. Workplace Policies

1. Do you encourage your employees to develop real skills and long-term careers (e.g. via a performance appraisal process, a training plan)?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Is there a process to ensure adequate steps are taken against all forms of discrimination, both in the workplace and at the time of recruitment (e.g. against women, ethnic groups, disabled people, etc.)?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you consult with employees on important issues?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Does your enterprise have suitable arrangements for health, safety and welfare that provide sufficient protection for your employees?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Does your enterprise actively offer a good work-life balance for its employees, for example, by considering flexible working hours or allowing employees to work from home?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>

How good workplace policies can contribute to your company's success

The long-term success of your business and your ability as an effective entrepreneur often depend on the knowledge, skills, talent, innovative creativity and – particularly – the motivation of your employees. As your enterprise grows, you will need people that you can rely on and delegate to, so that you can strengthen the business.

Although complying with legislation covering employment, workplace health and safety issues can ensure that you provide for your workers' basic needs, visible commitment to the improvement of their job satisfaction, career development and personal welfare will demonstrate that you really value them as individuals – and that you value their contribution to your business. Involving your employees will allow you to get more from them in terms of ideas, commitment and loyalty, enhancing your effectiveness as an entrepreneur.

Employees are the frontline troops of most businesses and may often see problems – and solutions – before you do. By ensuring that they understand your company's values and way of working, and by allowing them to contribute their ideas, they will help you better manage change as your enterprise evolves.

Here are some tips to help you build good 'internal partnerships' with your employees:

- ensure that there is trust between managers and employees;
- consult with your employees on business matters (where useful) and seek their cooperation on matters of importance to the company; and
- consider how individual employees' career development and skill-training can benefit your business over the long term.

Effective internal partnerships also create relationships that improve your business' flexibility, responsiveness and ability to share knowledge between workers. A motivated staff often leads to a stable, contented workforce – and helps to build a good reputation for the company.

3. Environmental Policies

6. Have you tried to reduce your enterprise's environmental impact in terms of:				
○ energy conservation?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
○ waste minimisation and recycling?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
○ pollution prevention (e.g. emissions to air and water, effluent discharges, noise)?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
○ protection of the natural environment?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
○ sustainable transport options?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Can your enterprise save money by reducing its environmental impact (e.g. by recycling, reducing energy consumption, preventing pollution)?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
8. Do you consider the potential environmental impacts when developing new products and services (e.g. assessing energy usage, recyclability or pollution generation)?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
9. Does your enterprise supply clear and accurate environmental information on its products, services and activities to customers, suppliers, local community, etc?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
10. Can you think of ways in which your enterprise could use the sustainability of its products and services to gain an advantage over competitors (e.g. recyclability of products, energy efficiency, etc)?				
Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	In part <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>

How good environmental policies can contribute to your company's success

Environmental degradation is both a global and a local problem of increasing concern throughout society – and therefore also among your customers. Further, good environmental performance often makes financial sense. Energy efficiency, pollution prevention, waste minimisation and recycling can all result in significant cost-reductions for the business, as well as other benefits such as ensuring compliance with environmental regulations, improving your relationship with the local community, motivating your employees and making your customers more loyal. All of these benefits clearly contribute to the long-term sustainability and success of your enterprise.

All companies – regardless of size or sector – can have positive and negative impacts on the environment. Negative impacts arise through the direct or indirect consumption of energy and resources, the generation of waste and pollutants and the destruction of natural habitats.

Although the potential to reduce negative environmental impacts may be limited in smaller enterprises, every enterprise can help by reducing energy consumption, by minimising waste and by recycling materials. Even modest improvements can make a profound difference when aggregated with the efforts of other businesses.

4. Marketplace Policies

11. Does your company have a policy to ensure honesty and quality in all its contracts, dealings and advertising (e.g. a fair purchasing policy, provisions for consumer protection, etc)?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
12. Does your enterprise supply clear and accurate information and labelling about products and services, including its after-sales obligations?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
13. Does your business ensure timely payment of suppliers' invoices?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
14. Does your company have a process to ensure effective feedback, consultation and/or dialogue with customers, suppliers and the other people you do business with?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
15. Does your enterprise register and resolve complaints from customers, suppliers and business partners?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
16. Does your company work together with other companies or other organisations to address issues raised by responsible entrepreneurship?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>

How good marketplace policies can contribute to your company's success

Enterprises are basically 'human' organisations that rely on a web of internal and external relationships which are vital for mutual prosperity. The way in which these working relationships are managed is often vital to the success of an enterprise. Good relations with customers and suppliers bring gains for both sides.

Good networking is critical to success. A quick way to improve your company's performance is to share experiences with suppliers, customers, other like-minded enterprises and local business organisations. There are many examples of good practice out there that can help you achieve your business objectives. You may also be able to help other companies by sharing your knowledge with them.

In order to maintain your enterprise's reputation, it's important to consistently 'do the right thing' in all of your working relationships. In practice, you can achieve a good reputation by satisfying customers, settling invoices on time and remaining committed to ethical business practices. This reputation is crucial to ensure success in the marketplace.

5. Community Policies

17. Does your company offer training opportunities to people from the local community (e.g. apprenticeships or work experience for the young or for disadvantaged groups?)
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
18. Do you have an open dialogue with the local community on adverse, controversial or sensitive issues that involve your enterprise (e.g. accumulation of waste outside your premises, vehicles obstructing roads or footpaths)?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
19. Does your enterprise try to purchase locally?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
20. Are your employees encouraged to participate in local community activities (e.g. providing employee time and expertise, or other practical help)?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>
21. Does your enterprise give regular financial support to local community activities and projects (e.g. charitable donations or sponsorship)?
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>

How good community policies can contribute to your company's success

There is a clear connection between a healthy and profitable business and the well-being of the community around it. Most small businesses are an integral part of their community and have an active involvement with local aspirations and activities. Such enterprises enjoy benefits such as:

- valuable networking and links with other local enterprises;
- increased customer recognition and esteem;
- enhanced company reputation; and
- improved staff recruitment and retention.

But being a good neighbour is not just about having respect for others in your immediate vicinity. Community support can include anything that benefits the community, such as sponsorship or the provision of time and expertise. It might cover participation in local sporting, educational or cultural initiatives. Helping to tackle social issues such as crime-prevention or long-term unemployment in your local area may also help the long-term financial success of your business.

Being positively engaged in your local community can also help you identify new markets, customers or business opportunities, build contacts with local authorities and opinion-leaders, and facilitate new partnerships with other businesses on community projects.

Try to choose activities that are aligned with your enterprise's business objectives (e.g. activities that interest potential customers or address your company's training and employment needs), are relevant to your local community, engage your employees and are within your capacity to provide.



6. Company Values

22. Have you clearly defined your enterprise's values and rules of conduct?					
Yes	No	In part	Don't know	Not Applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
23. Do you communicate your enterprise's values to customers, business partners, suppliers and other interested parties (e.g. in sales presentations, marketing material or informal communication)?					
Yes	No	In part	Don't know	Not Applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
24. Are your customers aware of your enterprise's values and rules of conduct?					
Yes	No	In part	Don't know	Not Applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
25. Are your employees aware of your enterprise's values and rules of conduct?					
Yes	No	In part	Don't know	Not Applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
26. Do you train employees on the importance of your enterprise's values and rules of conduct?					
Yes	No	In part	Don't know	Not Applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

How good company values can contribute to your business' success

Most small businesses already 'do the right thing' – or at least do a number of good things! Small and medium-sized enterprises often reflect the existing values and principles of the owner/manager. But few enterprises have put their values into a code of conduct, a statement of good business practice or even a set of simple rules articulating the company's vision, values, responsibilities and ambitions.

Defining and communicating your values will help you and your employees to remain true to what you believe in and help build your company's reputation, by providing a tool and making a statement of intent to the people and partners you deal with. People like to work for and with others who share their values, so doing this may help you attract employees, customers, suppliers and investors who approve of your principles.

Make sure that your company values really reflect your enterprise and its context. You should promote high standards in the workplace and deal positively with the interests and concerns of your employees, customers, suppliers and the local community.

Having clearly defined values is a starting point. As a general rule your values should provide clear and consistent guidance on how to handle situations that pose dilemmas or conflicts of interest. You will get the best results if you can convince others of your commitment to the company's stated values by:

- being a consistent role model personally;
- engaging people in dialogue; and
- communicating your values internally and externally.

A company's core values and principles – and its commitment to them – are inextricably linked with its reputation.