



Global Compact United Nations - Communication on Progress Business Language Skills

Period from May 2016 to May 2017

Statement of continued support by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

BLS's CEO makes a formal commitment to Global Compact principles every year in her note to shareholders.

Dear Shareholders

As you know, BLS's social and environmental responsibilities are key concerns in the decisions we make as a company. This year I am pleased to confirm that we have continued in this vein and have strived to advance the principles of Global Compact both within the company and throughout our customer and supplier base and, at our modest level, work towards the Sustainable Development Goals as set out by the UN Global Compact .

Since joining in 2004, we have continually upheld the ten principles of Global Compact with regards to human rights, labor standards, protection of environment and anti-corruption, promoted and supported those principles within our company and have striven to extend them to our sister companies, BLS formation and BLS Group. This commitment is included in our website on the home page.

Our panel of suppliers are in line with these principles and are increasingly present in the contracts we sign with our customers who share our values and support Global Compact in their framework agreements. Our Ethical Charter – code of Conduct, drafted and enforced in 2015 reflects our principles of respect for the individual, for solidarity and for the promotion of our values throughout our everyday business activities. Our staff continue to show their commitment and apply these principles in their undertakings and our charter is communicated to our partners and customers on a regular basis.

This year our efforts have been directed towards :

- ✓ deploying our internal Quality Action Plans on a more general level to ensure that the services we provide are an accurate reflection of our principles and those of Global Compact on a wider scale and to promoting the role of women in leadership.
- ✓ improving working conditions in our offices by replacing all the office chairs with ones that improve back support for staff
- ✓ installing movement detectors in the common areas of the building to economize energy while still maintaining lighting in the areas.

As always practical actions taken by our group in the last year are summarized in our Communication on Progress and periodically in our internal newsletters to staff.

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Karen Mander
Chairman & CEO



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Human Rights Principles

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

Assessment, Policy and Goals

Protection of Internationally recognized principles including Human Rights is expressly part of BLS's Code of Ethics, which is distributed to all employees when they are recruited. This information is also communicated to the Trade Unions, the Work inspectors and to the shop floor stewards. At BLS we make every effort to ensure equal opportunities for our staff (to training, to promotion opportunities, to access to the management for example) and to ensure a positive, respectful environment for all.

We reassert our commitment to the respect of human rights principles and labour law in the contracts we sign with our customers.

We also ensure that our suppliers respect human rights principles and respect the French laws and practices.

We respond favorably to surveys on our respect of human rights carried out by autonomous organizations.

Implementation

We publicize on our noticeboard our commitment to equality of treatment and respect for our staff and our commitment to ensuring that no form of harassment occurs in BLS.

Each new member of staff is made aware of our Ethical Charter – Code of Conduct and receive their personal copy. The Directors of the company take the time to explain our values and our way of doing business with respect to our Ethical Charter.



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Measurement of outcomes

- Monitors and evaluate performance
- Incidents on human rights violations

No claim regarding violation of Human Rights was reported in the period covered by the COP.

The Ethical Charter is adopted by all members of staff.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Our actions contribute to the SDGs 4 and 5 in that :

- ✓ we promote lifelong learning opportunities for our staff – using the resources of our annual training budget and helping to organize training through the CPF (compte personnel de formation) open to all employees and allowing them to be the central actor in determining what training they would like to follow .
- ✓ achieving gender equality and empowering all young (and older) female professionals.



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Labour Principles

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and

Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

Assessment, Policy and Goals

BLS upholds and applies the national labour rights in France and the branch agreement for training organizations.

Employees are free to choose their shop floor representatives and consult trade unions of their choice. They can request help and counselling from their shop floor representatives in negotiations or discussions with management.

Implementation

We have been involved this past year in actively promoting women in the work place.

We carry out an annual audit on health and safety “ le Document Unique” every year and publish the results on the BLS noticeboard. Globally very satisfactory, we have applied improvements in terms of ergonomics in the company to optimize working conditions.

BLS regularly consults an external legal firm to validate the contracts that are signed with staff.

BLS commissions this external legal firm to review contractual agreements with our staff to ensure that they correspond to any changes that may have occurred in French labour law in the previous year.



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Measurement of outcomes

No claim regarding violation of Human Rights was reported in the period covered by the COP.

An action plan is drawn up every year to improve working conditions and reduce risks cosigned by management and the staff representative body. This action plan is reviewed and evaluated every year by management and the staff representatives. All actions decided upon during the last 12 months have been implemented.

As a result of our annual audit on health and safety this year, we replaced all the office chairs for the permanent staff to improve back support and everyday comfort.

Demographics of management and employees by diversity factors (gender, ethnicity, age, nationality) are made available to staff representatives. BLS employees come from a wide variety of backgrounds :

- French, British, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Polish
- Columbian, Brazilian, Venezuelan, American
- Nigerian, South African
- Vietnam, China, Japan, Australia

With an equal balance between male and female employees
With an age range going from 25 to 63 years old.

Publication of the Ethical Charter – code of Conduct reinforcing the principles of integrity, mutual respect, transparency and professionalism at all levels.

Quarterly and annual statements from government social bodies confirm that our staff are correctly employed and declared and that we are up to date with all social contributions.

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Environmental Principles

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

Assessment, Policy and Goals

Description of the relevance of environmental protection for the company

Description of policies, public commitments and company goals on environmental protection

BLS has elaborated an Ecological Charter that is systematically handed out to each newly recruited employee. This document explains BLS's commitment to protecting the environment, preventing and managing environmental risks.

BLS ensures sustainability in the management of all its activities and is committed to minimize its impact on the environment such as promoting car sharing and preference for public transport.

Implementation

Some concrete examples of the implementation of our ecological charter are :

- installing movement detectors in the common areas of the building to economize energy while still maintaining lighting in these areas.
- the promotion of telephone or classes by Skype or Webcam to reduce the carbon footprint due to driving to and from our customers' offices for classes where public transport is not available.
- the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies – promotion of e-learning tools and remote conferencing internally. A formal offer for videoconferencing now completes our training solutions offer.
- the decision to work with suppliers that are committed to respecting the environment and with a sustainable development.
- the choice of a photocopier / printer certified “imprimvert”, the French ecological label” with standby functions to economize energy and renewed recycling efforts such as :
 - the choice to order recycled paper
 - recycling printed paper as internal notebooks
- raising awareness among suppliers by asking them for environmental data on their products.
- to favour “soft copies” of training materials (podcasts, IT versions of training packs) over “hard copies” such as paper training manuals and burning CDs. This option has been actively promoted for the last 3 years in our response for calls for tender and several companies have seized this more cost effective and environmentally friendly option.

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Measurement of outcomes

- No claim regarding violation of Human Rights was reported in the period covered by the COP.
- participation on external environmental as consulted,
- further reduction of our paper orders
- systematic recycling of rough paper for internal notebooks has enabled us to reduce by a further 3% our orders for notebooks (already reduced by more than 5% last year)
- active promotion of soft copy training materials -implementation in recent responses for calls for tender and winning training contracts.
- Use of distance communication tools (skype, webex etc) for training courses to further limit transport costs
- Development of “inter-class” digital and online materials to reduce paper consumption and help our students maintain and improve their language skills when they are not available for formal tuition.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Our actions contribute to the SDGs 8 and 13 in that :

- ✓ we provide decent working conditions for our employees and our Quality charter commits to ensuring that our classes are carried out in environments that encourage learning and have access to direct natural light.
- ✓ We strive towards reducing the carbon footprint linked to our training activities (reducing travel generally by the use of distant media to conduct training, by digitalizing our training materials, by favouring public transport solutions)



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Anti-Corruption Principles

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

Assessment, Policy and Goals

Principles regarding anti corruption, use of BLS or customer property (tangible or virtual) or information for personal needs are clearly stated in our internal code of conduct that has been validated by independent work inspectors.

This document is distributed to all employees when they are hired and is available on the staff noticeboard.

For our independent consultants, we require them to abide by the same principles as stated in our internal code of conduct

We have developed a specific workshop on money laundering that we offer and run for banking institutions.

Explicit reference to transparency in all our dealings in the Ethical Charter, published this year.

Implementation

With respect to anti corruption laws and principles, we run a workshop on money laundering for the banking institutions we work for.

We refrain from offering presents to our customers in that such presents could be construed as a means to influence the customer.

We are audited annually by a statutory auditor who examines our accounts and sends a report to the French authorities.

Customer information is protected and limited to essentials and does not include personal details (address, age, interests, family status etc) .

This information is only available to a limited number of people in BLS on a “need to know” basis . Access to the data is by password only and the data cannot be exported to any file format.

Measurement of outcomes

No claim or request for monetary sanction for corruption was reported in the period covered by the COP.

Annual statements from government financial bodies confirm that our accounts are in order, that we are up to date with all social and financial contributions to state bodies.