# Values Nost Valued

The /amo global corporate values survey 2021



The "Values Most Valued" survey is a unique in-depth look by the /amo network at the values espoused by the world's largest listed companies across 22 markets and 19 industries.

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## Foreword

Helping build and protect the reputations of corporations and institutions is central to /amo's strategic consulting business; and that requires a broad and deep understanding of the attitudes of an ever-widening range of increasingly vociferous and active stakeholders. Corporations, which we surveyed across 22 markets for our report, have long recognized that their 'license to operate' now extends far beyond the core objective of shareholder return and today encompasses sustainability, social responsibility and governance. This is once again reflected in our annual global survey of corporate values. We can look back on a guite tumultuous year, one defined by the first global pandemic for over a century and one which called for some very different corporate leadership qualities. While there have been no seismic changes in our findings this year, the trend towards improved corporate behavior continues, with integrity, respect, responsibility, and sustainability accounting for four of the top five individual values cited by the 525 companies reviewed in our survey. Innovation, as a central corporate value, holds on to second place. This should come as no surprise: as companies strive to engage with the broad range of stakeholder challenges they face, innovative thinking will certainly be key to corporate survival and prosperity.

Our report can also be seen as source for some optimism for the future. Corporate values are the clearest indication of how corporations wish to be perceived by their stakeholders, especially at a time when those stakeholders are becoming increasingly articulate in their demands of business, enabled by social media in what has been called a 'post-truth fake news society'. However, perception is only a part of the story. The communication of corporate values is vital in the process of building positive perceptions among stakeholders; but these perceptions will not be sustained unless clearly demonstrated by corporate behavior. All the companies reviewed here which have expressed their values in their key corporate communications tool – namely, the Annual Report – are demonstrating a willingness not only to make their aspirations public, but to be judged by those high standards they have set themselves.

Angus Maitland, Chairman, /amo

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The communication of corporate values is vital in the process of building positive perceptions among stakeholders.

# Survey Methodology\_

This report is the outcome of a simple question we asked ourselves: to what extent do the largest companies around the world aspire to the same values, and how have those values shifted over the last year.

This is the first time, to our knowledge, that anyone has made such an ambitious attempt to determine how the world's corporations seek to portray themselves, and how that differs across so many markets and industry sectors.

The question we asked is all the more timely because of deep impact of the COVID crisis upon behavior and beliefs around the world. And it is exactly the sort of question that the /amo network is ideally placed to answer, thanks to its strong local roots and its broad global reach. So we asked our consultants at the /amo agencies in 22 markets around the world to closely examine the annual reports published last year and this year by the largest listed companies in their markets, carefully recording the individual values each company claimed as its guiding principles.

The answer, as you will see in the following pages, is complex. Our research revealed an abundance of information, turning up almost 2300 individual values in total named by the 525 companies we reviewed. (Only 11 companies out of the 525 did not

identify any values at all.)

To make sense of this vast, varied array of prose - and occasional poetry - we then grouped those 2,300 individual values into 22 broad values-categories, themselves classified under three main headings:

# "Character values" – values related to who we are;

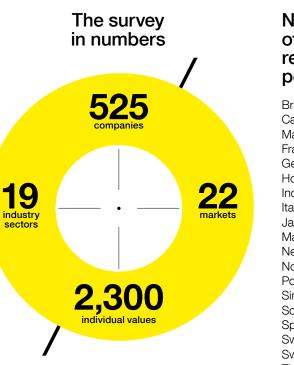
# "Professional values" – values related to how we work;

# "Stakeholder values" – values related to our stakeholders.

The results of this huge exercise are presented here in two formats, allowing first a comparative reading by market, and then by industry. This approach allows readers to focus on the more interesting and sometimes surprising differences in the aspirations of companies around the world, picking out how these vary from market to market and from sector to sector.

For each year, we took the largest companies by market cap. Given the volatility of some market sectors, this meant that the universe of companies was not exactly the same between the two years. The change in the popularity of certain corporate values from one year to the next will therefore to some extent reflect broader stock market trends.

To be sure, the strict definition of a "corporate value" has been stretched by many of the companies reviewed. The 2,300 or so entries include as many goals, aspirations, claims or principles as they do true values. However, for the sake of utility, we have made a deliberate choice not to speculate about, qualify or in any way judge each company's choice of words. The sheer size of our research universe, spanning 22 markets and 19 industry sectors, precludes such a granular approach. Instead, our goal has been to look at the big picture, identifying some of the broad trends and differences that emerge around the world and over time.



#### Number of companies reviewed per market:

Brazil – 15 Canada - 35 Mainland China – 35 France - 35 Germany - 35 Hong Kong SAR - 15 Indonesia – **10** Italv – 35 Japan – **35** Malaysia - 10 Netherlands – 15 Norway - 15 Portugal - 15 Singapore - 15 South Korea – 15 Spain - 15 Sweden - 15 Switzerland - 35 Thailand - 8 UK – 35 US – 75 Vietnam – 7

# Key findings\_

Overall, companies are putting more emphasis on their role as responsible members of society. Companies around the world are more determined today than before the pandemic to show that they care about people in general (beyond specific groups of stakeholders such as employees, customers or shareholders). Almost half of all the companies reviewed (47.4%) cite at least one value associated with concern for people & community, an 11% increase over the previous year, and placing such social concerns ahead of ethics & integrity as a broader category.

#### 2. Values related to

#### slipped, but remain important.

category related to ethics & integrity has slipped behind people & community this year, with 7.3% fewer mentions in the 2020/21 reports than the previous year. Nevertheless. it remains an important category, with 41.3% of the companies we reviewed laying claim, or at least aspiring, to high /moral standards in one form or another.

#### "Integrity" is still the single most popular corporate value. The individual value most frequently quoted both years in succession is "Integrity", put forward in one form

or another by 27.8% of companies this deontology may have year (up from 27.4% last year). In second place come The broader values-

variations on the word "Innovation" (25.5% vs 26.3%) followed by "Respect" in one form or another (16.6% vs 16.8%).

### New ways of thinking are prized.

Companies continue to set a lot of store by the way they work. Values related to creativity & innovation rank as the third most /popular category, cited by 40.4% of companies, even though this was down by a slim 4% from the previous vear.

#### 5. Companies focus more on corporate character than on their ways of working or regard for stakeholders.

Overall, companies put most emphasis on the broader class of values expressing corporate character (39.7%). The class of values related to ways of working comprise 33.2% of the total, while values expressing concerns for different stakeholders account for 27.0%.

#### 6. Seeina the bia picture is rising in importance.

The category of values related to long-term & global thinking shows the most rapid increase in usage in this year's crop of annual reports. Words and phrases evoking the importance of seeing the big picture are up a sharp 27.8% this year, even though they remain a relatively small category overall, only quoted by 4.4% of companies.

#### 1. Change for the sake of change is less appealing.

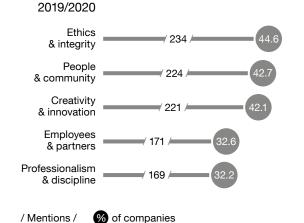
The most marked decline in usage this year comes in the category of values depicting some form /or other of change & transformation. This category is down a sharp 25.4%, quoted by only 9.0% of companies.

#### 8. One value still isn't enough.

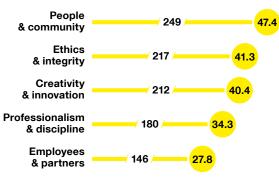
In all, we recorded a total of 2.277 individual values expressed by the 525 companies this year, slightly down from the 2.350 the previous year. This means that companies are listing an average of 4.3 individual values each, slightly down from the average 4.5 the previous year.

# Key findings

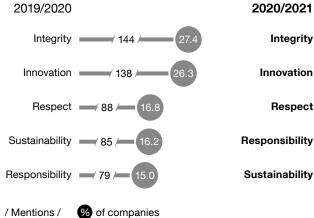
#### The Global Values Hit Parade (top five by category of values)

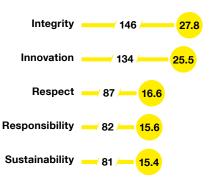


#### 2020/2021

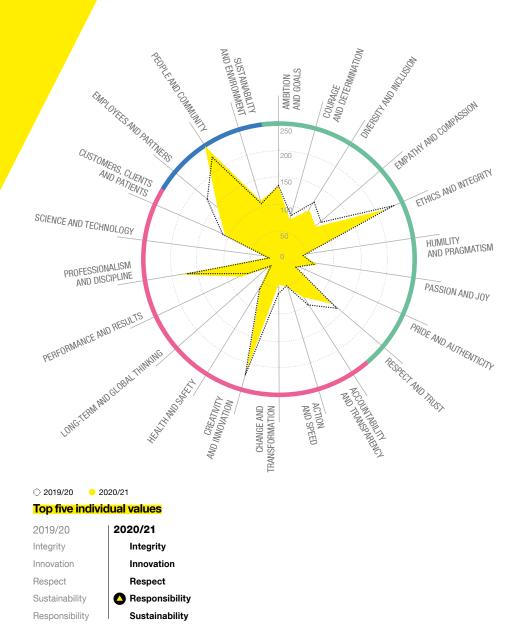


The Global Values Hit Parade (top five individual values)





# Key findings\_



The Global Values Hit Parade (by category of values)

	2021			
1910-03-031-030-00-D	No. of mentions	% of companies	Change of er	
"Who we are": the character values				
Ambition & goals Courage & determination Diversity & inclusion Empathy & compassion Ethics & integrity Humility & pragmatism Passion & joy Pride & authenticity Respect & trust	134 76 107 91 217 47 72 34 127	25.5 14.5 20.4 17.3 41.3 9.0 13.7 6.5 24.2	- 1.5 - 9.5 - 13.7 - 12.5 - 7.3 2.2 9.1 - 2.9 - 9.3	
"How we work": the professional values				
Accountability & transparency Action & speed Change & transformation Creativity & innovation Health & safety Long-term & global thinking Performance & results Professionalism & discipline Science & technology	83 52 47 212 63 23 76 180 21	15.8 9.9 40.4 12.0 4.4 14.5 34.3 4.0	- 17.0 2.0 - 25.4 - 4.1 - 4.5 27.8 22.6 6.5 23.5	
"Who we care about": the stakeholder values				
Customers, clients & patients Employees & partners People & community Sustainability & environment	107 146 249 113	20.4 27.8 47.4 21.5	- 4.5 - 14.6 11.2 5.6	

6 / Values Most Valued

# Values category #1\_

# **People & community**

A tangible concern for people, community and social responsibility has moved to top spot among the values cited by the 525 companies reviewed this year, ahead of ethics and other expressions of moral character in our hit parade of corporate values. The human-oriented values in this category take many forms. Some companies express their outward-looking attitude in the most straightforward way with simple words like "Community", "People", or "Social Responsibility". Others are more creative. Generoussounding words and phrases like "Involved", "Engaged", "Proximity", "Close", "Cohesiveness", or "Solidarity" are all prominent in this category too.

"Humanism" and "Humanity" are listed as values by a couple of companies while a handful adopt a more political view, with claims such as "Beneficial to the nation and state", "Voice for all people" and "Serving public and private stakeholders". Looking at the results of the survey by market, this broad category of People & Community ranks high pretty much across the board. In North America. across southern Europe, and in much of Asia, it uniformly features as one of the most popular categories, in most cases rising in prominence year-on-year. Curiously, however, in some European markets it is less popular, notably the UK, Switzerland and Sweden, all of which focus their attention closer to home, putting their employees and partners ahead of their concerns for society. Almost all the industry sectors rank concern for people among their top values, although healthcare and transport both set customers and patients ahead of the broader definition of community.

Some examples of how companies around the world express their concern for people & community:

Engagement

Give back to society Home culture Life People-oriented Proximity Respect for people Responsibility Social contribution Solidarity

# Values category #2\_

# **Ethics & integrity**

Companies continue to put ethical issues high on their list of values, even though the category has slipped in the past year and today ranks second to People & community. The most frequent expression of this moral stance usually appears in words such as "Integrity", "Ethics", "Sincerity" and "Honesty". Some companies take a more imaginative stab at conjuring up the idea of moral probity. Other turns of phrase include variations on "Doing the right thing", "Being open and honest", "Good morals", "Correctness", and even the more loquacious "Behave honestly and promote a culture of integrity". Some companies seek to refine

Some companies seek to refine the notion of morality with a rider: "Legal and ethical business dealings" is one more cautious claim, "Integrity and compliance" another. "Verbal honesty" leaves some room for moral maneuver, but this is matched by the strict "Integrity without compromise". Observed on a national basis, many markets across the spectrum from the US, UK and Japan to Malaysia and Singapore put a real emphasis on the ethical set of values. Meanwhile, in many of the continental European markets, such as Sweden, Norway, Germany and France, respect is mentioned even more frequently as a corporate value than ethics.

For the health industry, especially, an affirmation of ethical values is a clear priority. Others, like industrial products and media, also rank it highly. However, a handful of other sectors, notably mining, transport and automobiles attach relatively less importance to the issue. Some examples of how companies around the world express their respect for ethics & integrity:

Business ethics Correctness Do the right thing Honesty Good morals Integrity Intellectual honesty Principled Sincerity The right attitude for today, tomorrow, and always

# Values category #3\_

# **Creativity & innovation**

Creativity & innovation is the third most popular set of values in our survey, behind concerns for society and ethics. This is the most frequently cited category within the broader class of values related to ways of working, well ahead of other aspirations such as professionalism & discipline or accountability & transparency. For the most part, companies stick to a straightforward approach to expressing these values. A considerable number of companies opt for "Innovation", followed by "Creativity" and, to a lesser extent, "Curiosity". However, some that are looking to bring a more personal touch to their choice of words elaborate on the idea with phrases such as "Conformity kills creativity", "Pioneering spirit", "Finding a better way", "Taking time to ask guestions and report concerns", "Dive deep", "Invent and simplify" and "Purposeful innovation". Viewed market by market, creativity's global popularity is reflected in most, but a small

handful stand out as exceptions. For example, companies in Canada, the Netherlands, Malaysia, South Korea and Spain seldom mention creativity as a corporate value. On a sectoral basis, all the industry sectors set store by creativity, the only exception being the mining industry.

Some examples of how companies around the world show their creativity & innovation:

Always explore Curiosity Dare to disrupt Discover Innovation Inspire Limitless opportunity Modernity Open-minded Pioneer

# Values category #4\_

# **Professionalism & discipline**

An affirmation of high professional standards is the fourth most popular category of corporate values this year, showing a significant increase on the previous round of annual reports. Companies find numerous ways of demonstrating how they run a tight ship. Popular terms include variations on words like "Quality", "Efficiency", "Discipline", "Focus", "Precision", "Seriousness", "Competence" and "Expertise". Others express a similar message of professionalism & discipline by evoking their sense of personal responsibility for the work done: "Act like an owner", "Entrepreneurship" or "See-for-yourself management". There is no clear trend of bias by region in this category. In Europe, for example, France and Germany tend to rate such values very highly, whereas those same attributes seldom get a mention in Spain and the UK. In Asia, it is a similarly diverse picture, being

prominently featured in Japan and Malaysia, but barely at all in South Korea and Thailand. Looked at by sector, there is also a broad array of results, with professionalism ranking high in industries as diverse as engineering, retail, telecoms and transport, but low in business services, media and motor vehicles.

Some examples of how companies around the world demonstrate their high professional standards:

Act like owners Are right, a lot Discipline Do not hide behind email Efficiency Reliability Rigor Stability

# Values category #5\_

# **Employees & partners**

The spirit of teamwork remains a top-ranking value-category in many markets around the world, even though its importance has dropped significantly recently. The number of companies citing some aspect of their relationship with employees and partners as a core value has fallen by 15% in the last year, in large part replaced by expressions of a broader concern for people and the community. Variations on the idea of teamwork and team spirit are the most popular form of expression for this value, although many companies find other creative ways to deliver the same idea of working together: "We-spirit", "Cooperation and independence", "Realize the power of our people", "Human company". Some companies paint the picture of a caring environment for their staff: "Addressing wellbeing and mental health for our employees", "Live seriously,

work happily", "Work-life balance", "Happy employees" and "Taking care of our people".

Others are clearly looking to attract new recruits: "Employee welfare and compensation", "Cultivate best talent", "Hire and develop the best". And some are more blunt about what they want from their staff: "Employees' effort". Viewed market-by-market, a very varied picture emerges. Some markets, including Canada, France, Indonesia, Switzerland and the US, for example, place great store in their employees. Others, ranging from Brazil to the UK and Germany to Thailand, they seldom get a mention. By sector also, the situation is varied, but with a slightly clearer pattern. Broadly speaking, more client-facing companies, such as business and financial services and retailing, tend to rate employees higher than in other industries including food, mining, motor vehicles and transport.

Some examples of how companies around the world demonstrate they care about their employees & partners:

Cooperation Stronger together Taking care of our people Happy employees Hire and develop the best One team Partnership Stand together Team spirit Unity

# **Expressing value**

Some of the many words and phrases used to express corporate values by the 525 companies reviewed, arranged by value-categories. This is just a handful of more than 2,300 individual values detailed in the research for our survey.

#### Ambition & goals

Values that express the idea of excellence and ambition:

- Always doing our best
- Aspiration
- Best
- Celebrate success
- Excellence
- Global No.1
- Going beyond
- Perfection
- Think big
- Winning more important than ego

# Courage & determination

Values that evoke grit and bravery:

- Audacity
- Aggressiveness
- Boldness
- Bravery
- Challenge
- Driven
- · Have backbone: disagree and commit
- Resilience
- Tenacity
- Perseverance

#### Diversity & inclusion

Values that express inclusiveness and absence of prejudice:

- Balanced
- Diverse
- Equality
- Fairness
- Include different people
- Inclusion
- Integration
- Impartiality
- Multiculturalism
- We value difference

# Empathy & compassion

Values related to warmth and compassion:

- Appreciation
- Care
- Compassion
- Culture of warmth
- Empathy
- Friendly
- Gratitude
- Harmony
- Nurture
- Selflessness

#### Humility & pragmatism

Values that demonstrate unpretentious modesty:

- Frugality
- Keep it simple
- Modesty
- Patience
- Pragmatism
- Prudence
- Reasonability
- Stay hungry
- and humbleSimplicity
- Sobriety

Passion & joy

Values that suggest life's great and to be enjoyed:

- Beautiful
- Bringing smiles
- Delighted
- Dreams
- Emotion
- Enjoyment
- Enthusiasm
- Fun
- Happiness
- Optimism

# **Expressing value**

Some of the many words and phrases used to express corporate values by the 525 companies reviewed, arranged by value-categories. This is just a handful of more than 2,300 individual values detailed in the research for our survey.

#### Pride & authenticity

Values that show a determined embrace of identity, tradition or origins:

- Authenticity
- Candor
- Culture
- Create our own path
- Freedom
- Genuine
- Independence
- Inheritance
- Live true
- Transmission

#### Respect & trust

Values that show respect for and from others:

- Be respectful
- Credibility
- Dignity
- Earn client trust everyday
- Honorable
- Loyalty
- Mutual respect
- Reputation
- Treat people with respect
- Treat people w
- Trustworthy

#### Accountability & transparency

Values that show a respect for openness and playing by the rules:

#### Accessibility

- Act in accordance with the laws and regulation
- Compliance
- Feedback
- Fiduciary
- Good governance
- Keep promises
- Holding ourselves and each other accountable
- Openness
- Transparency

#### Action & speed

Values that express vitality and speed:

- Accelerating impact
- Agility
- Bias for action
- Eneraize
- Flexibility
- Launch fast
- Proactivity
- Speed
- Urgency
- Vitality

# Change & transformation

Values that define a willingness to learn, improve, and do things better:

- Adaptability
- Development
- Evolution
- Gaining knowledge
- Improvement
- Learn every day
- Lifelong learning
- Pursuing progress
- Transformation
- Renewal

# **Expressing value**

Some of the many words and phrases used to express corporate values by the 525 companies reviewed, arranged by value-categories. This is just a handful of more than 2,300 individual values detailed in the research for our survey.

#### Health & safety

Values that demonstrate a concern for health and safety:

- Can-do safely
- · Create a sense of security
- Healthy living standards
- Protect
- Risk control
- Legally safe
- Security
- · Take only risks we understand and can manage
- Wellness
- Zero-harm workplace

#### Long-term & global thinking

Values that go beyond the here-and-now:

- Build enduring relationships
- Capital for the future
- Foresight
- Forward-looking
- Future
- Global reach
- Going global
- Internationalization
- Lona-term perspective
- Next-gen partnerships

#### Performance & results

Values focused on delivering results:

- Achievement
- Deliver results
- Drive growth with innovative services
- Growth
- Make true value
- Outperformance and confidence
- Performance-minded
- Results
- Shareholder
- Value creation

#### **Science** & technology

Values that illustrate a respect and dedication to science and technology

- Alive to technological and social changes
- Be science-based
- Cuttina-edge technology
- Digitization
- Scientific excellence
- Science-led
- To bring together best of
- technology to help people, business, and the nation
- Technology
- To know
- We follow the science

#### **Customers**, clients & patients

Values that set the emphasis on those who buy what we have to offer:

- Champion customer experience
- Client focus
- Consumer first
- Dedication to customer's success
- No one tries harder than customers
- Obsess about customers
- Passionate about customers
- Patient focus
- Market orientation
- Service

#### **Sustainability** & the environment

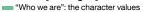
Values that express a concern for the environment, the planet and nature:

- Biodiversity
- Build a sustainable legacy
- Circular economy
- Commitment to protect the environmental sphere
- Energy transition
- Green development
- Prize our planet
- Sustainable performance
- Resource optimization
- Respect for the nature of all things

MARKETS Brazil Canada Mainland China France Germany Hong Kong SAR Indonesia Italy Japan Korea Malaysia Netherlands Norway Portugal Singapore Spain Sweden Switzerland Thailand UK USA Vietnam

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#### Values by category



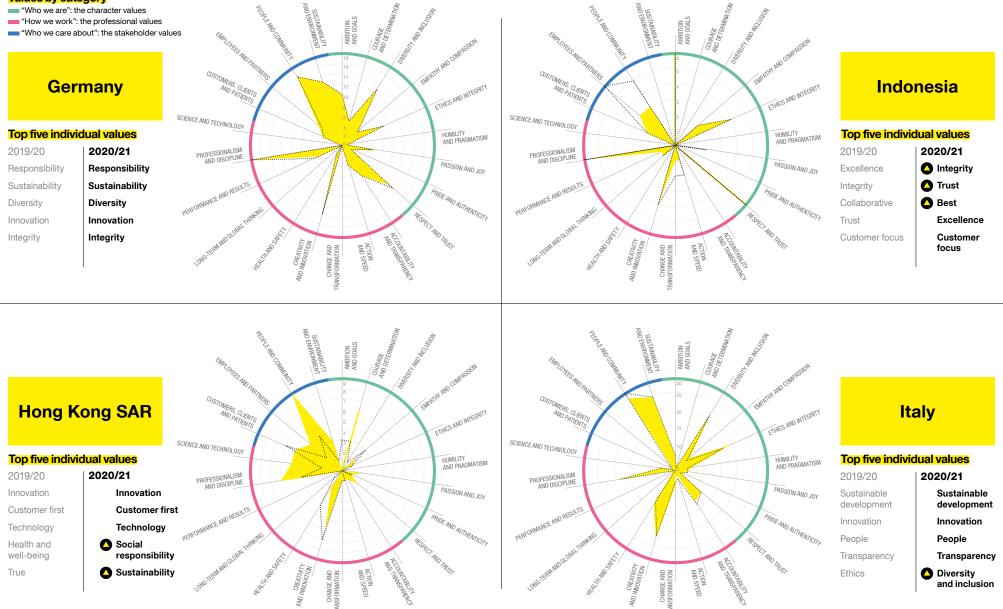
How we work": the professional values

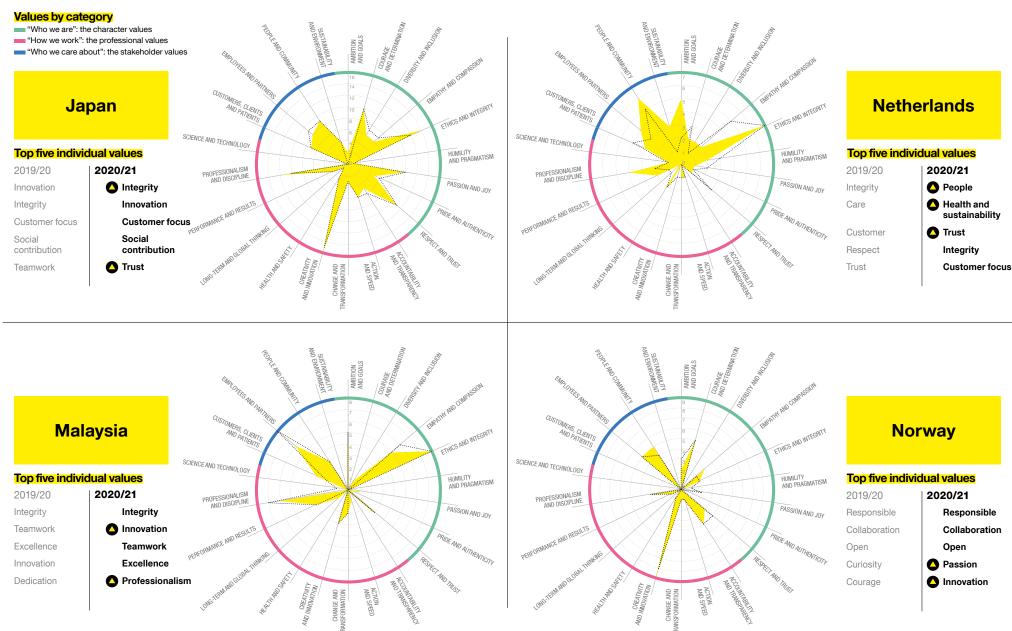


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#### Values by category

- "Who we are": the character values
- "How we work": the professional values





#### 2019/20 02020/21

#### Values by category



Enterprising

AND INNOVATION

CHANGE AND ISFORMATION

ACTION AND SPEED

Health Hall

Community

focus

Change

ASCOUNT ABILTY AND

ACTION AND SPEED

AND INNOVATION

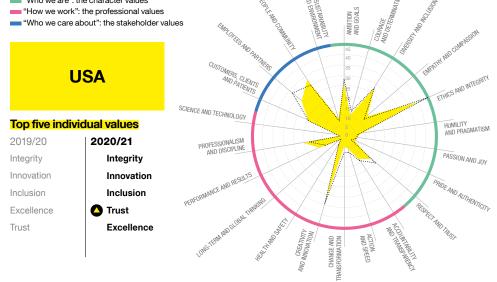
CHANGE AND ISFORMATION

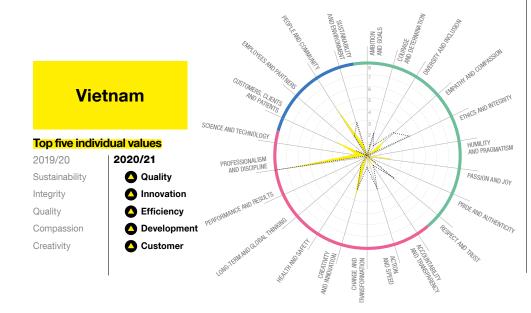


2019/20 - 2020/21

#### Values by category

- "Who we are": the character values
- How we work": the professional values
- "Who we care about": the stakeholder values



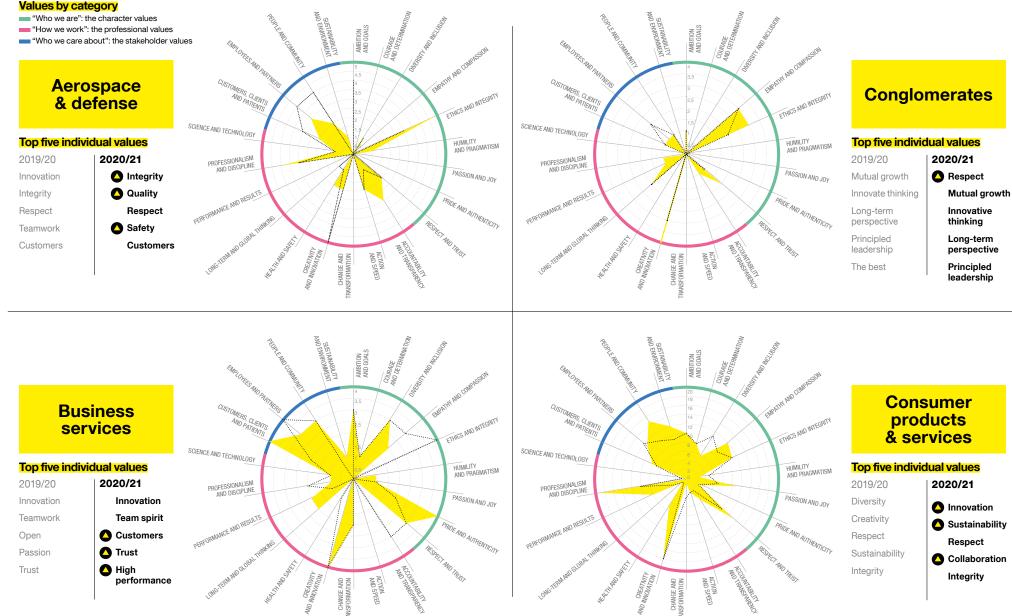


#### **INDUSTRIES**

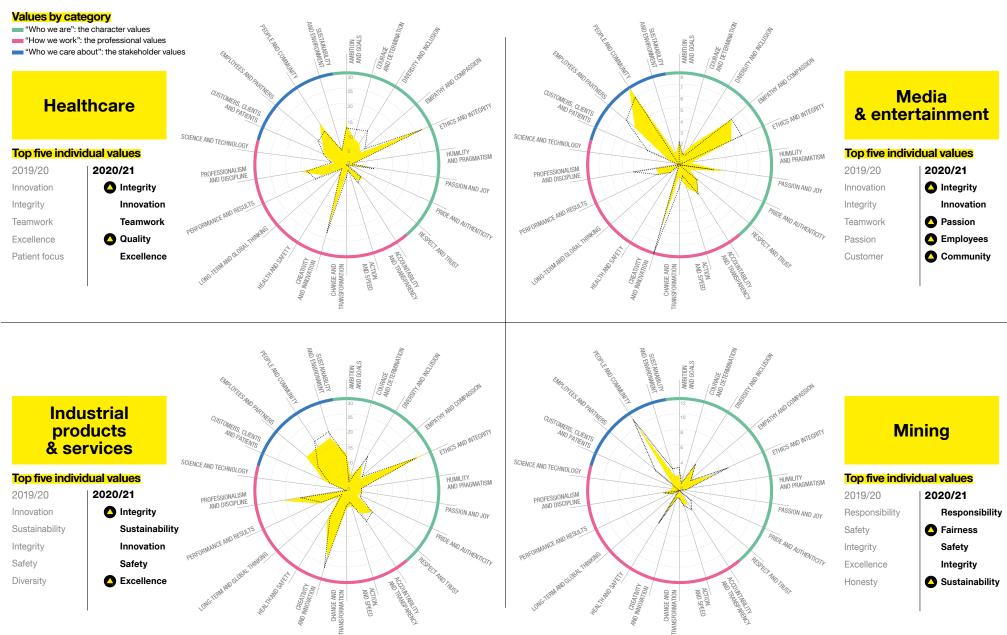
Aerospace & Defense **Business Services** Conglomerates Consumer products & services Energy & utilities Engineering, construction & real estate **Financial services** Food, beverages & tobacco Health Care Industrial products & services Media & entertainment Mining Motor vehicles & parts **Retailing & ecommerce** Technology hardware & equipment Telecommunications Transportation & logistics

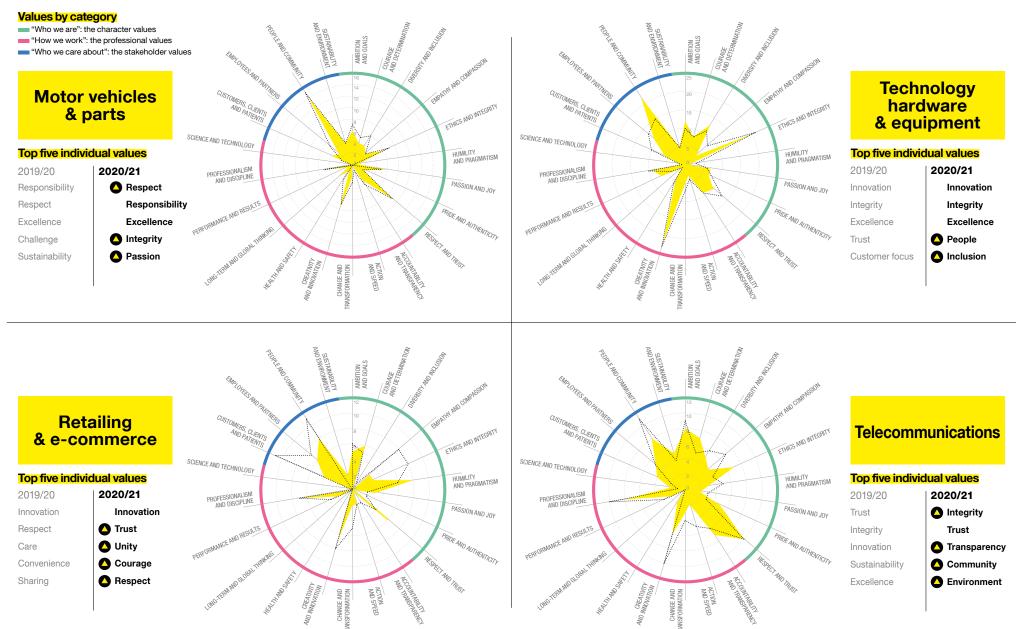
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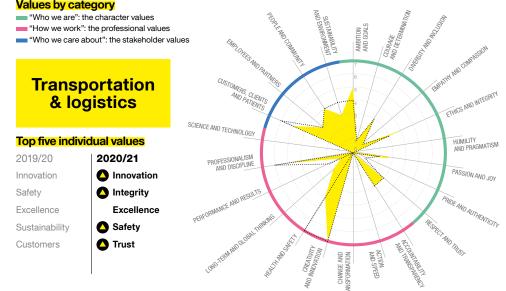




#### 2019/20 - 2020/21

#### Values by category

- "Who we are": the character values
- "How we work": the professional values
- "Who we care about": the stakeholder values



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# About /amo\_

The /amo network is a global organization of strategic communications advisors dedicated to building, enhancing, and protecting our clients' reputations while helping achieve their business objectives. The /amo network is present in more than 19 countries, with best-in-class consultancies in

ith best-in-class consultancies i	es in <b>Amsterdam</b> ,		<b>York City</b> ,	
	Beijing,	Opor	to,	
	Berlin,	Ottaw	a,	
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	Washington	, D.C.		
	and Zurich.			
Montreal,				

We offer a full range of services to our clients, including:

#### **Transactions:**

We are a top-ranking network for cross-border M&A and communications with long and deep experience in all types of capital market transactions.

#### Transformation:

We work closely with our clients and their employees through every success-critical mission of corporate transformation.

#### **Engagement and responsibility:**

We help our clients identify, listen to and engage with all their key stakeholders, including investors, regulators, public officials, employees and customers.

#### Crisis:

We stand by our clients at their most challenging moments, providing insight, expertise, perspective and competence to help them navigate crises in their domestic and international markets.

#### Policy:

We advise clients on potential significant government policy changes, how they may affect them and how they can lobby and campaign to protect their interests

The /amo network is backed by Havas, one of the world's largest global communications groups, founded in 1835 in Paris.

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#### Contacts

Charles Fleming Chief Marketing Officer /amo charles.fleming@havas.com