

## Purpose & Impact *Now*

September 15, 2023

### Barbie and the Chinese Phantom

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Hi Reader,

Pink is in the air.

A dear friend recently sent me some pictures he took during the first ever Canal Pride in our hometown Leiden, celebrating diverse and colorful love. Around the same time, I went to see Barbie, the Movie, with my teenage girl Nina (It was interesting to watch how the filmmakers played around with the stereotyped gender imaging attached to the Doll You Love To Hate and her handsome but irrelevant companion Ken, while poking fun at male-dominated toy company Mattel, which makes fortunes commercializing the pinky doll).

So that's what inspired my choice for the #WordOfTheWeek. To counterbalance this sticky-finger sweetness, I chose a very different topic as my #RemarkableResources recommendation: a shady and dangerous businessman who is also known as the Chinese Phantom. And finally, I'm sharing a free FairChange communications tool for impactful storytelling – the ethical way.

Enjoy reading!

## #WordOfTheWeek - Pinkwashing

*In this section, I pick words that stand out in the socially responsible and sustainable business space and share my take on why they are important for purpose-driven leaders.*

### **Pinkwashing** – Also: **Rainbow washing.**

The little sister of greenwashing – making a company or product appear to be more environmentally friendly than it really is – pinkwashing refers to misleading consumers by presenting the brand as an LGBTQ+ ally when in reality it isn't, or just to a very limited extent. Typical examples are marketing campaigns for products that celebrate diversity and sponsoring Gay Pride parades waving rainbow flags, while at the same time engaging in activities that don't support these communities at all.

Time and again, cases of pinkwashing pop up. Think of multinational corporations putting forward a pro-pink image in some markets, but refusing to speak up in operating countries where homosexuality is a punishable offense. Or companies running glamorous ads showcasing same-sex couples when in reality their employees are scared to come out of the closet, intimidated by a toxic organizational culture towards LGBTQ+ people.

Why should authentic impact businesses keep away from pinkwashing? Companies that believe in the importance of LGBTQ+ must do more than present their brand as diverse and inclusive whenever it is convenient for marketing and sales. They should live up to that image throughout their organization and throughout the year.

## #RemarkableResources – The World's Most Dangerous Arms Dealer

*In this section, I normally include resources that help purpose-driven leaders enhance their capacity to build a better world. But this week's recommendation highlights a different kind of businessman, who does exactly the opposite.*

Arduous investigative journalism by Frederik Obermaier and Bastian Obermayer has resulted in a book and a documentary about Karl Lee, alias Li Fangwei. He is also called the Chinese phantom, Rocket Man, and The World's Most Dangerous Arms Dealer. The German journalists, renowned for their work on the Panama Papers, follow the trails of this shady figure across four continents.

The Chinese businessman supplies Iran with missiles that kill in the Middle East, and Russia with weapons for possible deployment in Ukraine. The CIA, MI6 and the Mossad have been hunting him for years and American presidents have personally asked Beijing to stop him. But Karl Lee's network continues to be active.

The book and the documentary show the rise of China in world economics, and how cold-blooded business and self-interested world politics intersect. It is a chilling True Crime story that reminds us of the importance of changing systems and mindsets to turn dangerous profit-making into business for good.



## #ImpactBusinessTools - Ethical Storytelling Principles

Maybe you have downloaded the Impact Storytelling Principles Checklist from the FairChange or Katmondo Media website at some point. I'm proud to share that a new and even better version is now available!

Called The 9 Ethical Storytelling Principles for Positive Impact, they are meant for businesses who want to boost their marketing and communications with authentic storytelling. The Checklist gives you the basic do's and don'ts of telling stories that sell while putting strengths and solutions first.

[\*\*GET PRINCIPLES CHECKLIST\*\*](#)

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## #CaptivatingQuote

*"Leadership is not about the individual.  
Leadership has to be about the welfare of society."*

Kofi Annan (1938-2018), Ghanaian diplomat, social reformer and 7th United Nations Secretary-General

I hope you'll have an excellent week!



Talk soon.  
All my best,

*Katja Marianne*

Katja Marianne Noordam  
FairChange • Katmondo Media

#### **About Purpose & Impact Now**

This is a newsletter with updates, tips and resources about doing business with a higher purpose and leading with positive impact. Please reply with any questions or feedback. I personally respond to all emails. Delighted to build a better world together! // Katja

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