CEO ACTIVISM IN 2018:
THE TECH EFFECT
Increasingly, CEOs are speaking out publicly and taking stands on controversial issues. CEOs now have a track record of speaking up about social, political and environmental issues, such as climate change, gender pay equity, same-sex marriage, immigration, gun control and discrimination.

Because many Fortune 500 companies are seeking the next generation of skilled technology talent to drive innovation and meet the demands of the future, we decided to sample tech professionals to understand their particular viewpoints on CEO activism. This sample includes people such as software/application developers and software engineers working in a variety of sectors.

*CEO Activism in 2018: The Tech Effect* is the second report issued in the 2018 annual poll conducted by Weber Shandwick in partnership with KRC Research about CEO activism. *CEO Activism in 2018: The Purposeful CEO*, the first in our 2018 report series, focused on American consumer opinions about CEO activism.
The new generation of technology professionals is a highly coveted group for companies in every market and every sector. Because of their highly specialized and advanced skill set, they are being hired in increasing numbers by employers of all sectors, not just traditional technology companies. Our study, a first of its kind among this select audience, provides further evidence that the momentum for CEO activism is not going away and CEOs are increasingly expected to take principled positions on societal issues among the next generation of skilled employees.

Andy Polansky, CEO
Weber Shandwick
Weber Shandwick partnered with KRC Research in May/June 2018 to conduct an online survey of 502 adults employed in one of the following professions: software/application developer, software engineer, web developer, database administrator, computer systems analyst, computer programmer, software QA engineer, network systems administrator, business intelligence analyst or data scientist.

The survey describes CEO activism to respondents as follows: “In the past year or so, some chief executive officers (CEOs, or top leaders of companies) have spoken out publicly and taken a stand on controversial issues. For example, CEOs have spoken up about social, political and environmental issues such as climate change, gender pay equity, same-sex marriage, immigration, gun control and discrimination.”
WHAT WE LEARNED
TECH PROFESSIONALS FAVOR CEO ACTIVISM. POSITIVITY TRAVERSES BORDERS.
82% of tech professionals have a favorable opinion of CEO activists

Favorability of CEOs taking a public position on hotly debated current issues in general (% tech professionals)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
<th>Mexico</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentages</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don't know

- 13%

Does not make a difference

- 15%

Less favorable

- 15%

More favorable

- 2%

- 8%

- 2%

- 16%

- 11%

- 14%

- 9%

- 2%

- 2%

- 4%

- 2%

- 2%

- 2%

- 2%

Percentages may not add exactly to 100% because of rounding.
Tech professionals who work for technology companies have a slightly higher favorability than those in non-tech sectors for CEO activism.

FAVORABILITY OF CEOs TAKING PUBLIC POSITIONS ON HOTLY DEBATED CURRENT ISSUES IN GENERAL (% TECH PROFESSIONALS)

Work in Technology sector
- A little more favorable: 42%
- Much more favorable: 44%

Work in a Non-Technology sector
- A little more favorable: 46%
- Much more favorable: 35%

FAVORABILITY FOR CEO ACTIVISM IS NOT LIMITED TO THOSE IN THE TECH SECTOR

Percentages may not add exactly to 100% because of rounding
81% of tech professionals think CEOs have a responsibility to speak up about issues that are important to society (% tech professionals)

Total: 81%
- Yes: 90%
- No: 4%
- Don't Know: 16%

Country-wise:
- USA: 69%
  - Yes: 90%
  - No: 6%
  - Don't Know: 16%
- Canada: 74%
  - Yes: 84%
  - No: 10%
  - Don't Know: 16%
- Brazil: 90%
  - Yes: 90%
  - No: 2%
  - Don't Know: 8%
- Mexico: 84%
  - Yes: 77%
  - No: 4%
  - Don't Know: 19%
- UK: 77%
  - Yes: 83%
  - No: 1%
  - Don't Know: 15%
- China: 83%
  - Yes: 83%
  - No: 1%
  - Don't Know: 15%
- India: 98%
  - Yes: 98%
  - No: 2%
  - Don't Know: 1%

Percentages may not add exactly to 100% because of rounding.
WHY CEOs HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO SPEAK UP

In Tech Professionals’ Own Words…

“I have heard CEOs talking about security issues and data privacy, those are very important for us.”

“Opinions of CEOs are important for company popularity.”

“This shows their responsible attitude.”

“CEOs who stand for environmental protection measures popularize their products among the public.”

“CEOs are often heard in media expressing their views on sensitive issues and it is good for society.”

“Because CEOs get maximum media attention and their views are widely broadcast.”

“CEOs can influence decisions by speaking out against certain issues OR evils.”
CEOs BUILD TECH EMPLOYEE LOYALTY BY STANDING UP FOR COMPANY VALUES. IN RETURN, TECH PROFESSIONALS EXPECT LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT TO THE ISSUE.
88% of tech professionals agree CEOs need to speak out when their company’s values are threatened. 78% expect CEOs to speak up on employees’ behalf.

% tech professionals agree that...

- CEOs need to speak out when their company’s values are violated or threatened
  - Total: 88%
  - USA: 78%
  - Canada: 83%
  - Brazil: 78%
  - Mexico: 87%
  - UK: 98%
  - France: 81%
  - Germany: 89%
  - China: 86%
  - India: 94%
  - (92%)

- Employees today expect their CEOs to speak out publicly on their behalf
  - Total: 78%
  - USA: 68%
  - Canada: 78%
  - Brazil: 68%
  - Mexico: 81%
  - UK: 69%
  - France: 86%
  - Germany: 70%
  - China: 85%
  - India: 94%
  - (92%)
79% of tech professionals would be more loyal to their organizations if their CEO took public positions on issues

Loyalty toward own organization if CEO took public position on hotly debated current issue (% tech professionals)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
<th>Mexico</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>India</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Don't know
- Would not make a difference
- Decreases loyalty to organization
- Increases loyalty to organization

Percentages may not add exactly to 100% because of rounding
86% of tech professionals expect that words should be followed by action, 79% assume that the board is aligned with the stance and 74% think there’s value in a CEO being among the first to speak out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% TECH PROFESSIONALS AGREE THAT...</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>🇺🇸</th>
<th>🇨🇦</th>
<th>🇧🇷</th>
<th>🇲🇽</th>
<th>🇬🇧</th>
<th>🇨🇳</th>
<th>🇮🇳</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When CEOs take a public position on a hotly debated current issue, they should back up their words with action, such as donating money to a cause or changing the way their organization does business.</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a CEO publicly takes a position on a hotly debated current issue, it is assumed that the board of directors of the CEO’s company has the same point of view.</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important for a CEO to be among the first to speak out on hotly debated current issues.</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT SHOULD CEOs SPEAK OUT ON?
TECH PROFESSIONALS WEIGH IN.
The top issues tech professionals, globally, think CEOs should express opinions on are job/skills training, equal pay and privacy and personal data protection.

**Issues CEOs/business leaders should express an opinion on (% tech professionals)**

- Job/skills training: 74%
- Equal pay in the workplace: 73%
- Privacy and personal data protection: 72%
- Artificial intelligence: 68%
- Globalization: 67%
- Healthcare coverage: 66%
- Gender equality: 66%
- Sexual harassment: 63%
- Free speech rights: 62%
- Maternity/paternity leave: 61%
- Climate change: 60%
- Race relations: 55%
- Nationalism: 51%
- Immigration: 48%
- LGBT rights: 46%
- Gun control: 44%
- Refugees: 41%
- Legalization of marijuana: 37%
- Abortion: 30%
THE TOP-RANKED ISSUES TECH PROFESSIONALS WANT TO HEAR CEOS ADDRESS ARE VERY SIMILAR ACROSS MARKETS

Exceptions are free speech rights in Brazil, sexual harassment in the UK and healthcare coverage in China.

| TOP 3 ISSUES CEOs/BUSINESS LEADERS SHOULD EXPRESS AN OPINION ON (% TECH PROFESSIONALS) |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1                             | Privacy and data protection 72% | Job/skills training 79% | Artificial intelligence 86% | Equal pay in workplace 91% | Privacy and data protection 65% | Equal pay in workplace 74% |
| 2                             | Job/skills training 69%  | Equal pay in workplace 76% | Job/skills training 84% | Privacy and data protection 85% | Job/skills training 64% | Gender equality 74% |
| 3                             | Globalization 61% | Privacy and data protection 68% | Equal pay in workplace 81% | Gender equality 80% | Sexual harassment 62% | Healthcare coverage 71% |

Figures are based on a survey of tech professionals in multiple countries. The chart shows the top issues that tech professionals want their CEOs to address, with the percentage of tech professionals who prioritize each issue.

- **Privacy and data protection** (72%)
- **Job/skills training** (69%)
- **Globalization** (61%)
- **Artificial intelligence** (86%)
- **Equal pay in workplace** (91%)
- **Free speech rights** (86%)
- **Job/skills training** (84%)
- **Privacy and data protection** (85%)
- **Equal pay in workplace** (81%)
- **Gender equality** (80%)
- **Sexual harassment** (62%)
- **Healthcare coverage** (71%)

The chart also highlights exceptions in specific countries.

- **Brazil**: Free speech rights
- **UK**: Sexual harassment
- **China**: Healthcare coverage

The data is presented in a visually appealing way, with icons for each country and a clear, concise summary of the top issues and their respective percentages.
TECH PROFESSIONALS IN AND OUT OF THE TECHNOLOGY SECTOR SHARE THE SAME TOP ISSUES THEY WOULD LIKE CEOs TO ADDRESS

Job training, equal pay and data privacy are all ranked as the top three issues by tech workers in and outside of the technology sector, suggesting that these are professional issues not specific to industry-specific challenges and reflect shared values of this group of employees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP 3 ISSUES TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS WANT CEOs TO ADDRESS (% TECH PROFESSIONALS)</th>
<th>WORK IN TECHNOLOGY SECTOR</th>
<th>WORK IN A NON-TECHNOLOGY SECTOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Privacy and data protection 82%</td>
<td>Job skills/training 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Equal pay in the workplace 81%</td>
<td>Equal pay in the workplace 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Job skills/training 80%</td>
<td>Privacy and data protection 67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gender equality 64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Globalization 64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Artificial intelligence 64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WOMEN TECH PROFESSIONALS SURPASS MEN ON FAVORING CEO ACTIVISM
WOMEN TECH PROFESSIONALS HAVE ESPECIALLY HIGH REGARD FOR CEO ACTIVISM

Female technology professionals are significantly more likely than their male colleagues to agree that CEOs need to defend company values, to have a more favorable opinion overall of CEO activism and to feel CEOs have a responsibility to speak out. 80% of women say their loyalty to their employers would increase if their organizations were led by CEO activists.

% TECH PROFESSIONALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree that CEOs need to speak out when their company’s values are violated or threatened</th>
<th>WOMEN</th>
<th>MEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have a more favorable than unfavorable opinion of CEOs who take a public position on a hotly debated current issue</th>
<th>WOMEN</th>
<th>MEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree that CEOs have a responsibility to speak up about issues that are important to society</th>
<th>WOMEN</th>
<th>MEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loyalty to employer would increase if the CEO took a public position on a hotly debated current issue</th>
<th>WOMEN</th>
<th>MEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FEMALE TECH PROFESSIONALS ARE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE LIKELY THAN MEN TO THINK CEOs SHOULD SPEAK OUT ON MANY ISSUES

The biggest gaps between male and female technology professionals are on maternity/paternity leave, job/skills training and gender equality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Women (%)</th>
<th>Men (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job/skills training</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal pay in the workplace</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy and personal data protection</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare coverage</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globalization</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternity/paternity leave</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free speech rights</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate change</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Only issues with significant differences between men and women shown.
GUIDE TO LEVERAGING CEO ACTIVISM TO ATTRACT & RETAIN TECH PROFESSIONALS
GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ATTRACTING & RETAINING TECH PROFESSIONALS WITH CEO ACTIVISM

1. Recognize the advantage of CEO activism when it comes to attracting and retaining technology employees.
2. Make company values crystal clear, both internally and externally.
3. Take into account the issues that resonate most with tech professionals.
4. Don't overlook the wide reach of CEO activism. It is not limited to the U.S. nor to technology companies.
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