CCO Views into 2024

January 16, 2024

The CCO View of the Year Ahead

As organizations confront increasing stakeholder expectations, pursue sustainability agendas, experiment with AI, navigate complex geopolitical developments and contend with rising employee activism, the strategic leadership of the chief communications officer (CCO) has never been more vital.

Page, the premiere global membership association for CCOs and other senior communications and public relations leaders, set out to understand the latest stakeholder risks and opportunities.

How We Listened

Page fielded a survey of its member CCOs between December 18, 2023 and January 15, 2024, garnering 38 responses across North America, Europe and the Middle East.

We also partnered with The Harris Poll to field a public opinion survey about confidence in business between December 1-12, 2023, garnering responses by 11, 612 individuals across 10 markets.

The Harris Poll

Harris Insights & Analytics LLC, A Stagwell Company

Page CCO Survey

Top 2024 Business Risks According to CCOs

Q:

What is one critical risk you see from your unique perspective as a Chief Communications Officer that should be on most business' radar in 2024?

45% — **Geopolitics and elections**
International conflicts; many contentious elections

29% — **Polarization**
Divisiveness; eroding societal fabric

14% — **Mis/Disinformation**
Threats to democracy; advent of AI

14% — **Employee issues**
Talent wars; organized labor; employee activism; return-to-office mandates

Combined percentage of Page survey respondents whose open-ended answer referenced one of the items listed. n=38

Top 2024 Opportunities According to CCOs

Q:

What would you say are the one or two biggest areas of opportunity for business from the CCO perspective? Please be specific.

32%

Evolving the Communication Function

Leveraging new tech for personalization, speed and scale; demonstrating tangible value/ROI

26%

AI

New capabilities and products/services

13%

Corporate Culture

Attracting top talent; employee engagement; future of work

13%

Navigating risk

Geopolitics; climate; economic challenges

Combined percentage of Page survey respondents whose open-ended answer referenced one of the items listed. n=38

CCOs Words of Advice for CEOs in 2024

Q:

What would you say is one crucial piece of advice that CEOs need to hear from CCOs right now?

"It's highly unlikely that your personal social/political views match those of a diverse workforce. **Tread lightly making statements** on behalf of an entire company."

"Don't react to trends, hyperbole and media narratives. **Stay focused on building a strong business** that creates long-term value. Everything else is noise."

"**Truth and authenticity are still paramount**. Employees want to know that their employer cares and is not caring selectively. Have refreshed and strong values."

"Embrace the world of hybrid work. There's no going back and it offers clear advantages. **Be intentional about your hybrid work strategy** and stick to it."

"Whatever you think is the appropriate amount of **time spent communicating to and with employees**, do more."

"ESG backlash is real, but so is the need to **make progress against the agenda** in measured ways. It's a balance."

"It's been a pressure-filled four years. **Stress takes a toll.** Make sure leaders are not burnt out."

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Page/Harris Poll

Confidence in Business Index

Methodology

Qualification Criteria:
General Public / Consumers
Adults Ages 18+

Sample Size:
n=11,612

Field Dates:
December 1 – 12, 2023

Mode:
Online survey

Weighting:
Data weighted country populations to ensure results are projectable to adults ages 18+

GLOBAL MARKETS
(Global n=11,612)

Brazil	n= 1078
Canada	n= 1016
China	n= 1002
France	n= 1011
Germany	n= 1021
India	n= 1055
Italy	n= 1041
Japan	n= 1014
UK	n= 1043
US	n= 2331

CONFIDENCE IN BUSINESS ISSUES

1. Economic stability and growth
2. Job creation and workforce skills development
3. Environmental Issues
4. Corruption
5. Mental health issues
6. Income inequality
7. Trust in key societal institutions
8. Racial/ minority equality
9. Potential negative impacts of AI
10. Regulation of AI
11. Gender equality
12. Maintaining new workplace flexibilities
13. Major international conflicts
14. Improving products and making UX better using AI
15. Polarization in society

In tables and charts:
Percentages may not add up to 100% due to weighting, computer rounding, and/or the acceptance of multiple responses.

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There's a 26-point gap between how important the public believes it is for business to address these issues and their confidence that business can have an impact.

Issues

Economic stability and growth
Job creation and workforce skills development
Environmental Issues
Corruption
Mental health issues
Income inequality
Trust in key societal institutions
Racial/ minority equality
Potential negative impacts of AI
Regulation of AI
Gender equality
Maintaining new workplace flexibilities
Major international conflicts
Improving products and making UX better using AI
Polarization in society

Importance

for leading companies to make an impact

80%

Confidence

that leading companies can make an impact

56%

(% very confident, 6/7 on 7-pt scale; all issue average)

Source: Page-Harris Poll Confidence in Business Index (n=11,612 across 10 Global Markets)

Toplines

Seven issues stand out in importance for business to address*

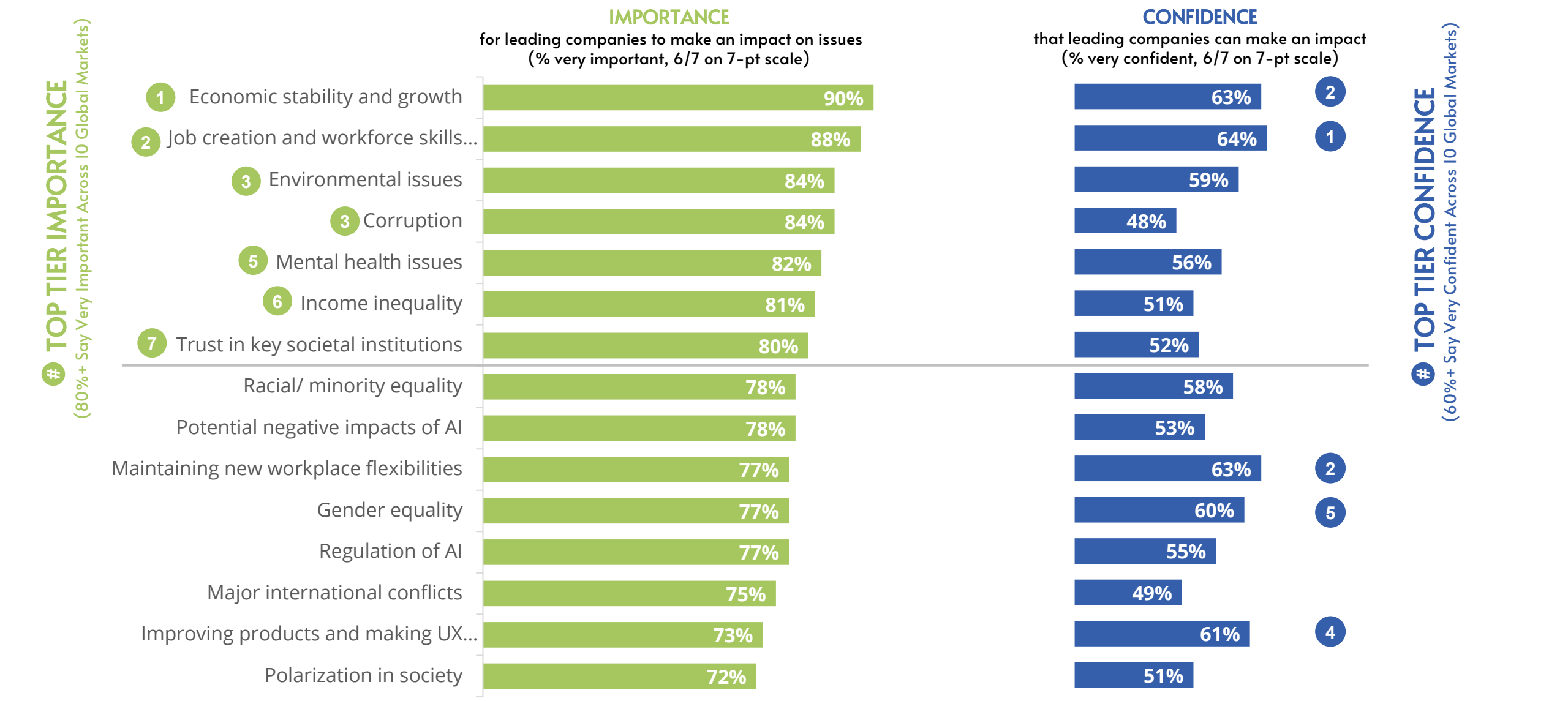
1. Economic Growth
2. Job Creation/Skill Development
3. Environmental Issues
4. Corruption
5. Mental Health
6. Income Inequality
7. Trust in Key Societal Institutions

*Cited by over 80% of respondents as important for business to address

Only Economic Growth and Job Creation/Skills Development have high public confidence that business can have an impact

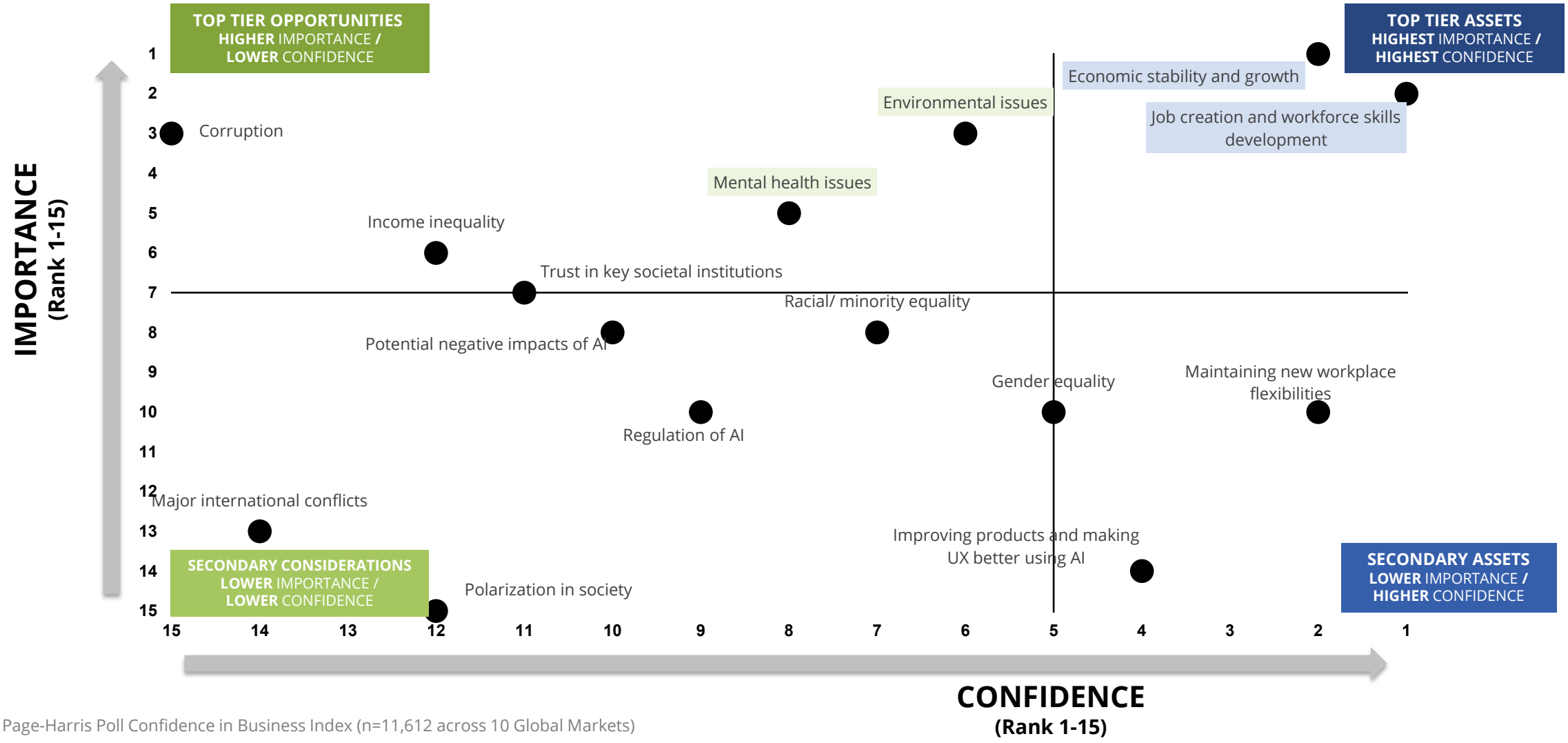
Environmental Issues and Mental Health are the top opportunities as confidence is relatively high

Confidence Gaps



Source: Page-Harris Poll Confidence in Business Index (n=11,612 across 10 Global Markets)

Business Assets & Opportunities



Source: Page-Harris Poll Confidence in Business Index (n=11,612 across 10 Global Markets)

*Quadrant divider lines based on top tier importance (Top 7 Issues 80%+ say are Very Important) and top tier confidence (Top 5 Issues 60%+ Say Very Confident)

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