



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A CEO Playbook for Climate Advocacy

POW 



The CEO Playbook is a comprehensive guide to support CEOs looking to integrate climate advocacy into their organization's mission, values, and business practices at the level that works best for them.

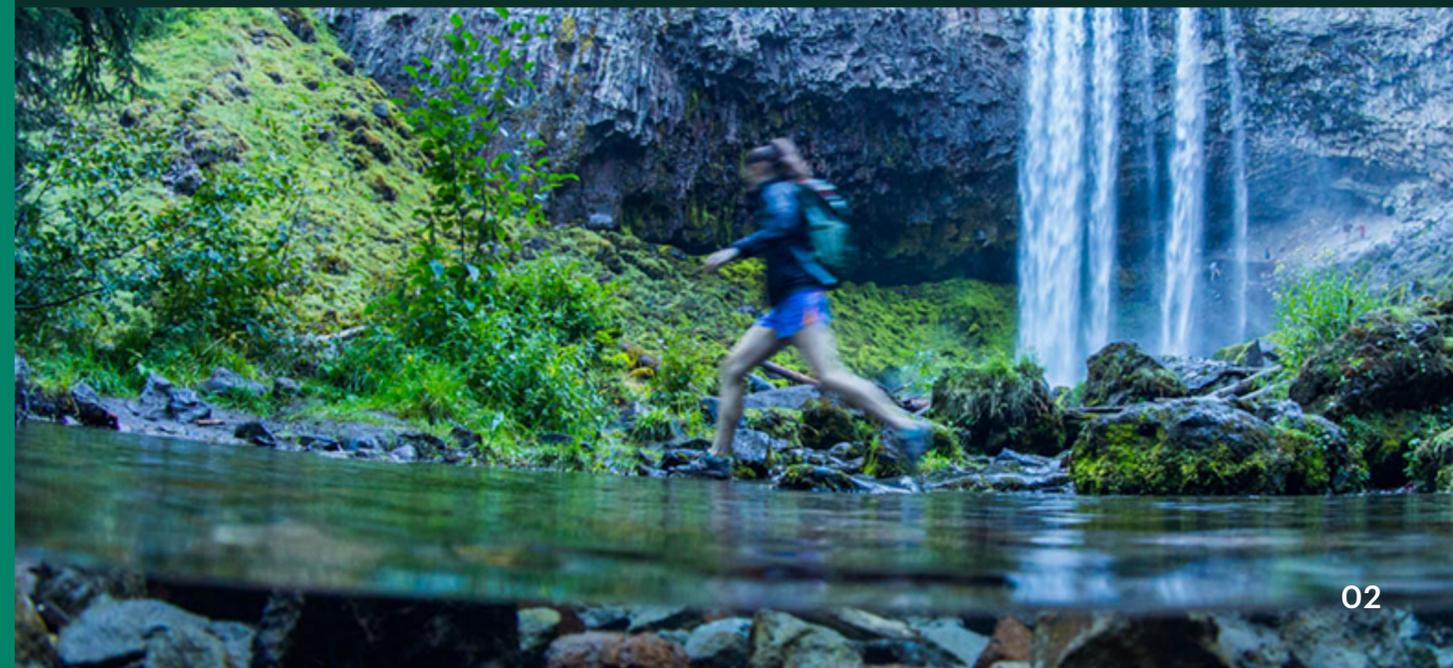
It offers a foundational understanding of corporate advocacy and its real world impacts, a business case for advocacy, strategy framework, and a set of 'Plays' business leaders can consider for their organization.

The ideas in the Playbook are battle-tested by POW and our brand partners and designed to be flexible to meet any brand's unique needs.

“ The CEO - as leader of a company with reach, resources, creativity, cultural relevance, a duty to stakeholders, and a deep well of trust, holds a set of keys to unlock critical solutions that is unmatched in the climate movement.”



Erin Sprague
CEO, POW





What is advocacy?

For businesses, **advocacy is simply exerting your company's influence to help achieve outcomes beyond your direct control.**

Advocacy is not activism. It certainly isn't partisan politics.

What about sustainability?

Advocacy builds on sustainability initiatives. While sustainability efforts measure and reduce a company's direct CO2 emissions, advocacy represents indirect actions a business can take to champion systemic change beyond its direct impact. These collective efforts have the power to generate benefits at a far larger scale than a business could accomplish by taking direct sustainability actions alone.

With the right strategy and partnerships, a company's climate advocacy can help create long-term business value and the systemic change that enables communities and companies to thrive.

Climate advocacy in this political landscape

Today’s climate advocacy will look very different from climate advocacy of the past.

Anxiety is high, as companies are keen to avoid becoming a political football. But while some national politicians – often funded by fossil fuel interests – would have you believe climate change is a highly partisan issue, the underlying science and the growing consensus of Americans across ideological lines cannot be denied. Data shows that climate denialism – or even opposition – is an outdated stereotype.

Messaging about business, jobs, and economic growth – along with security and health – have bipartisan appeal. Beyond the rhetoric, businesses, nonprofits, local governments and communities are busy working on solutions. **And consumers – especially young people critical to every brand’s relevance and future growth – want to support brands that advocate authentically and consistently for climate action.**

EXPECTATION

“ It’s a partisan issue ”

“ It’s for environmentalists ”

“ It’s not what customers want ”

REALITY

There’s consensus about the problem

With growing concern among consumers, debates have shifted from questioning climate change to policy concerns and how we address climate impacts.

[Politicians consistently underestimate or fail to represent the widespread popularity of climate policies](#) among their constituents. In fact, climate is [more bipartisan than ever – especially among young Republicans](#), and particularly as IRA funding has flowed into red districts.

It’s an economic story

Climate change is an economic issue – with jobs, innovation, and competition at stake – and corporations have a unique ability to frame it as such.

Since the IRA passed in 2022, more than 270 clean energy projects have been announced, totaling [over \\$224 billion in private investment and 170,000+ U.S. jobs](#). More broadly, [strong climate action could raise U.S. GDP per capita by 60% by 2050](#).

Americans want brands to act

Americans want brands to advocate for climate solutions – including government action.

A large majority of Americans – especially young people – [believe companies have a responsibility to help solve society’s most pressing challenges](#). [Two-thirds say large businesses are doing too little on climate](#), with just 21% saying they’re doing the right amount. Most Americans [support more federal climate action](#).

Corporate climate advocacy is about recognizing that business gains just as much from climate advocacy and solutions as the rest of society.

Climate advocacy pays off across a range of business outcomes, supporting:

- A growth outlook
- Reputation and resilience
- Consumer relationships
- Employee engagement
- Financial health
- Regulatory certainty

70% of CEOs label climate risks “high” or “very high”



CEOs are uniquely positioned to elevate how climate advocacy intersects with business goals.

An advocacy strategy should be unifying for a CEO's team, define functions and who owns advocacy, and how it interfaces with sustainability, ESG and impact.

The CEO playbook details these eight steps to building an advocacy strategy and introduces the most effective "plays" to bring it to life.

01 Research & Readiness

02 Frontline Relationships

03 Focused Agenda

04 Skin in the Game

05 Clear & Compelling Messaging

06 Advocacy Platform Development

07 Launch Moment

08 Sustain & Expand

Access the full CEO Playbook

To access the full CEO Playbook
please visit [here](#).

