GREAT PLACE to WORK

Code of Ethics | Quality policy | Sustainability

Sintetica®
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our main values represent the real and deep reason for our success. The culture of total respect and the focus on the individual person shall be considered as our heritage. With this clear goal in mind and in heart, I have great pleasure in presenting ‘Sinterica, Great Place to Work’. In the hope that each of us will actively take part in the project and will be a careful guardian.

Augusto Mitidieri, Corporate CEO
This Code of Ethics forms the core shared principles for all Sintetica employees for the protection of the company’s image and credibility and to ensure responsible behaviour.

The formulation of a shared Code of Ethics thus aims to encourage and guarantee responsible behaviour on the part of management and employees, as well as to protect Sintetica and its employees against improper behaviour that is not consistent with the values of the company.

It is important to formulate clearly the principles, values and responsibilities that guide Sintetica’s behaviour on the market, in relation to the communities in which it is commercially active, and in relation to people and all others affected.

Sintetica’s employees are urged to observe the laws and regulations that apply in the countries where Sintetica is active and to adopt the ethical principles laid down here as their own.

The Code of Ethics is the tangible symbol of the responsibility that Sintetica accepts in relation to its employees and all those affected: patients and consumers, healthcare personnel, suppliers and external workers, officials and government representatives, shareholders and investors.

Sintetica’s behaviour complies with the statutory requirements, professional ethos and its internal guidelines. The pursuit of Sintetica’s interests does not justify any dishonest behaviour or behaviour that contravenes the principles set out.
Putting people first

In placing value on people (whether or not they belong to the company) Sintetica sees the expression and foundation of its culture and identity. Sintetica encourages and supports human diversity in all its forms as an expression of richness and as the source of long-term development.

Awareness and respect for the individual and the protection of a person's physical and moral integrity are the core values that guide Sintetica's approach.

Protecting the integrity of the individual

Sintetica places great emphasis on the psychological well-being of its employees, on terms of employment that respect the dignity of the individual, and on a work environment that encourages motivation and a feeling of belonging. Demands that contravene the law, the Code of Ethics, the individual's convictions or moral or personal values are not tolerated, and neither is the use of force or coercion to pressure people into complying with such demands.

Ethical principles

Equality and impartiality

Honesty and impartiality determine how Sintetica behaves. The aim is to encourage an open dialogue and always to seek a fair balance of the interests and legitimate expectations of all parties and those affected by its activities, in particular by ensuring employees are remunerated in a manner in line with their role, the expertise and experience they have acquired and that is appropriate in light of their benefit to the company as well as the cost of living, and that reflects the company’s resources. Furthermore, Sintetica treats all employees equally irrespective of their gender, nationality and place of residence, religion and political views.

Developing its employees

Sintetica recognises that its employees are the basis of its competitiveness and of its success. Sintetica therefore invests on an ongoing basis in the development and further professional training of its employees, both in the operational/technical field and in management, with a focus on increasing the performance of its employees and their contribution to continued improvement.

Correctness and transparency

Sintetica is committed to clarity and transparency in communications with its employees for the sake of giving them a comprehensive understanding of the circumstances in which they work.

Sintetica takes care that the scientific information provided to health professionals such as doctors, nurses and pharmacists is correct and that the communications and advertising targeted at patients and consumers contain no claims not based on scientific facts.

In its dealings with regulatory and supervisory bodies Sintetica ensures that the scientific data provided is transparent and correct and complies with applicable procedures and laws.
Relations with healthcare professionals

On the part of its managers and employees, Sintetica is mindful of the need to behave ethically when dealing with healthcare personnel, in particular of the need to comply with the laws that apply in the countries where it is commercially active and with the recommendations of industry organisations and authorities. Sintetica expressly undertakes not to influence decisions by doctors and pharmacists through direct or indirect advertising intended to benefit them personally in material terms.

Health and safety

Within the applicable provisions Sintetica guarantees the health and safety and physical integrity of its employees and advisors as well as terms of employment respecting the value of the individual and a safe and healthy workplace.

Sintetica undertakes to ensure the quality of its pharmaceutical products by using optimised organisational and scientific procedures in order to protect the health of patients and consumers.

Environmental protection

Sintetica regards the environment as our essential fabric. Its activities are structured by the principle of ensuring the best possible balance between commercial initiatives and environmental concerns in accordance with applicable law, but also with considerations regarding the sustainable use of natural resources.

Complying with the Code of Ethics

Every employee or advisor of Sintetica formally undertakes to observe this code and to actively implement it in their own everyday dealings and in carrying out their job.
Quality policy

Sintetica SA, a Swiss pharmaceutical company which has been manufacturing sterile injectable preparations (medicines and medical devices in accordance with Directive 93/42/EEC) for more than 95 years, considers that its quality management system is one of the main tools that permit high-quality products to be supplied to end users.

The company’s choices are based on the following principles:

- Maximum quality of commercial pharmaceutical products and medical devices.
- Customer satisfaction.
- Continuous improvement, innovation and growth.
- Pursuit of the company’s aims in a responsible manner and in line with the principles of sustainable development.

Consequently, the Management endeavours to:

- Introduce and implement, throughout the company’s organisation, a Quality “culture” with clear and specific support from the management.
- Encourage the customer to be proactive so that products can be developed in accordance with his/her requirements.
- Maintain a functioning quality assurance system which is in line with Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) in the pharmaceutical industry.
- Promote research and development and encourage innovation of products and processes.
- Guarantee the safety of the products’ end users, by assuring strict controls on the entire manufacturing chain starting from the raw materials up to distribution of the finished products.
- Correct any deviations according to standards and implement preventive measures to avoid their recurrence.
- Seek to optimise processes with a view to maximising efficacy-efficiency and ensure protection of the environment.
- Advocate competence and knowledge of staff, by appropriate training and awareness initiatives.
- Encourage internal communication at all levels of the company, making suitable tools available.
- Ensure adequate resources so as to achieve the established aims.
- Promote continuous improvement of the working environment and staff well-being at all levels of organisation.
- Share and spread at all company levels its own code of ethics, based on recognition of the central importance of the person and on protecting his/her integrity, in accordance with the principles of equality, impartiality, honesty and transparency towards all stakeholders (employees, collaborators, healthcare professionals, regulatory authorities and customers) and respect for the environment.

The Management undertakes to communicate the quality policy to all the staff and periodically re-examine it (at least on an annual basis) to ensure its relevance.
The idea of sustainability

The man at the centre. This is the basic belief which inspires Sintetica. Therefore, respect as a means to an end, not the end in itself in order to maximize profits.

A great place to work is the foundation on which the conceptual setting innervating Sintetica rests. Therefore the goal is to be a great place to work not only within the company but also in its productive dimension with which the surrounding social and environmental realities can be confronted in terms of sustainability.

A basic strategic idea pursued with belief and consistency. Particularly, this comes in many forms at this crucial stage of new strong expansion of the oldest pharmaceutical company in Ticino, which celebrated its 95 years of life in 2016. 1

By virtue of the excellent quality of its products, Sintetica has been able to become the first Swiss group in regional anaesthesia and pain therapy, securing the international markets in a swift and increasing way.

These results were possible by putting all its efforts into maintaining the high quality of products and production methods of the highest level in terms of knowledge, care and control.

All strategic and operational decisions implemented by the Group consistently follow this vision, which seeks to combine maximum attention to the product and to the recipients, who are the beneficiaries, as well as to the whole production chain and the development staff who are responsible for it. All this in a context of great care of the social and environmental dimensions, in which the entire production process is interpreted, from the acquisition of raw materials to the distribution of the finished product.

1. “Over this considerably long period of time Sintetica has never stopped its production, even at the time of the second world war, consolidating the brand over time, inevitably tying its name to the high quality of its products. In the beginning operating on the Swiss market, the most advanced and demanding in the world in the pharmaceutical field, Sintetica has established itself as the leading company in its sector of business nationwide, making it a strategic asset for the entire Country (...). The company’s core business is represented by analgesic, local anaesthetic and narcotic injectable drugs for hospital use. With more than 150 products in its portfolio, Sintetica stands as a market leader and one of the leading international names in the industry.” (Fabrizio Cecchi, Human resources management in the new civil economy model. The Sintetica case SA, Degree thesis 2012)

Sustainability is part of the company’s DNA as it made clear by its Code of Ethics:

“It is essential to express clear principles, values and responsibilities that guide the behaviour of Sintetica in its relations with the market, with the communities in which it operates, with people and with all its stakeholders. (...) The Code of Ethics is the tangible symbol of the responsibility of Sintetica towards its employees and all of its stakeholders: patients and consumers, health professionals, suppliers and external collaborators, officials and government representatives, shareholders and investors.” 2

The most recent stage of development of this corporate philosophy is represented by the Corporate CEO’s definition of a so-called “Human-centered” vision: “The ‘Human-centered’ organisational model, based on a deep-rooted cultural change that is already taking place at Sintetica, requires an innovative managerial philosophy that revolves around responsibility and merit, leading to changes in organisational models and behaviours at all levels. The corporate context, which is dynamic and highly innovative in terms of operational/management ideas, projects, products and solutions, is not conducive to people management based on activity definition and control. It is more often the case that it goes hand in hand with an approach based on making people responsible for clear objectives, giving them greater power and autonomy in managing their tasks. As a result, managers are required to go from a role of marked command/control to a coaching role, managing people and helping to make the most of their talents, through delegation and assigning responsibility for results, thereby rewarding merit.” (“The Human-centered organisation. The new way of working at Sintetica”, Mendrisio 2018)

2. Code of Ethics, in “2014 Sintetica a Great Place to Work”
Social sustainability

In the overall framework of the strategic choices for sustainability policies, attention to the human dimension in Sintetica certainly occupies a very privileged position.

This vision led the company to focus its energies on the welfare of its employees. Remaining deeply faithful to this approach, the Directorate General has embarked upon a courageous and innovative corporate choice at a level of corporate organisation, bringing the HR Division directly within the field of Sustainability.

Attention to the human resources in Sintetica is developed right from the personnel research and selection activities. Among the criteria taken into account in the context of recruitment procedures, in addition to disciplinary skills and academic/educational background, which in certain areas must be very high, the personal attitudes of social and cultural openness deserve particular emphasis in addition to availability when dealing with alternative mobility solutions.

In terms of personnel policies, particular attention is paid to the research and development of talents, thereby ensuring not only the acquisition of new know-how but also maintaining that acquired and expanded over the years. Sintetica in this sense has created a wide range of services and benefits over time with the intention of building a truly great place to work.

From a contractual point of view, the choice carried out by Couvet is worth mentioning, to eliminate night shift work ensuring its workers not only a decisive improvement in living conditions but also the maintenance of the wage level which was previously assured thanks to compensation arising from night work.

Other contractual benefits that deserve a mention include the payment of a whole year’s salary to the family of an employee in the event of their death, income-based financial contributions towards nursery and childcare costs, with a view to ensuring a good work-life balance, and the organisation of summer holiday clubs for the children of employees. Another much-appreciated arrangement is the fact that the company allows either parent to stay at home and look after their children if they are ill for up to three consecutive days, without having to produce a doctor’s certificate.

The company strives to offer both apprenticeships in various fields within its competence and continuous training opportunities, be it specific, therefore linked to the skills required for the production cycle, and of a more general nature, with a view to spreading the culture of the enterprise and/or overall cultural enrichment; all this through meetings, events or dedicated opportunities.

In partnership with the MIP in Milan, it has also launched a complex blended training programme for managers and talents. This programme is all about democratic learning, meaning that it is open to all employees and is provided thanks to the use of a dedicated digital platform.

The commitment of Sintetica with regard to its employees is constant in the substance and renewed in the forms, aspiring to act as a point of reference in political-cultural moments that do not always have a positive impact on open-minded views and attitudes. This outward-looking attitude towards the world is indeed one of the constitutive characteristics of the Sintetica profile, a company which by its own business vocation is geared to global markets but also, by its own “political” choice, is saturated with multiculturalism. Sintetica, in its structure between Switzerland (with the headquarters of Mendrisio and the other production site in Couvet), Italy, Germany and the UK, now has over 300 employees from over 29 different countries, with significant growth forecasts for the next five years.

Sintetica is, therefore, by its very nature, a socio-productive organisation, which has been structured through multiculturalism.
An initial corporate smart-working project has been up and running for a couple of years, with excellent results. The project, intended primarily as an operational solution designed to enhance the compatibility between home and work, provides that employees from certain departments can work from home for a few days a week. Their activities are based on objectives, therefore without the imperative to respect precise working hours. The organisation of this work solution, which is performed outside the office areas necessitated the provision of a range of IT and communication tools that make telework ‘friendly’ but also effective. The experimental phase was also an opportunity to collect the indicators necessary for setting up new dedicated ‘smart places’ inside the company.

With regard to health and well-being, through a free of charge subscription to a gym situated near its premises, Sintetica offers its employees the opportunity to exercise whenever they want. An offer which has been completed with a series of relaxing gymnastics lessons held directly in the company and with a course specifically dedicated to lifting loads.

Two particularly popular communal catering solutions also deserve a special mention. Every morning, employees are served a free breakfast, with local handmade pastries and locally grown fruit being brought into the hall of the headquarters on a pedal-powered food cart. Meanwhile, a vintage-style truck, parked outside the Mendrisio site at lunch time serves a variety of food, all of which is cooked in a traditional fashion using local ingredients.

The entrance hall at the Mendrisio headquarters has undergone major restyling work to make it a much friendlier meeting place. Renovation work has also been carried out at the Couvet site for a similar purpose, creating a brand-new canteen among other things.

Finally, still, on the subject of facilities granted to its employees, it should be noted that Sintetica provides free mineral water, coffee, tea and wi-fi.

The activities in the field of social sustainability, as already mentioned, globally bombard the Human Resources even in the “traditional” sense. In this respect, one of the major projects for the immediate future will be the implementation of further investigation into the wage system of the two production sites to achieve a common position on a wage policy, while ensuring absolute fairness between men and women.
The very nature of Sintetica products, leading drugs in pain therapy, is defined, as mentioned before, in a sort of essence of sustainability. The distinctive feature of their nature requires the deployment of extreme attention to all stages of the production, from the raw material acquisition to the delivery of the finished products. All Sintetica products are manufactured and controlled in accordance with the highest quality and safety values, meeting the strictest provisions of Swiss, European, US and International standards. For this reason, investments in terms of excellence in human resources and financial resources, intended for the crucial departments of Sintetica for these processes are substantial.

Special mention should be made in the context of the ability of Sintetica in having developed an innovative packaging concept, “Instinct”, which makes the use of their products safer and easier especially in emergencies, both active and reactive such as hospital emergencies.

In this regard, Sintetica has implemented another extremely innovative project: a new fully automated and highly digitalized line for the production of polypropylene vials.

Sintetica’s commitment in the socio-cultural sphere also extends even outside of the wide business and corporate perimeter. It focuses particularly on the local dimension where their own operational headquarters are active, nevertheless developing, perfectly in line with its spirit of identity, even on an international scale.

As regards the local scope a whole series of commitments should be indicated, particularly in the form of sponsoring, in the areas of sport, culture and social activities.

Sintetica’s commitment to solidarity at an international level places particular attention to those forms of aid that, as well as financial support to specific projects, have relevance to its productive target. The provision of important quantities of injectable drugs free of charge is considered a form of high value-added support for humanitarian aid organisations with which Sintetica has decided to collaborate.
Environmental sustainability

The environmental sustainability commitment of Sintetica unfolds in all the processes of the production cycle: from R&D to delivery, all the way through production and marketing. A constant goal is to reduce the environmental impact of our work by reducing carbon emissions and integrating the use of natural resources. A goal in which our operational partners must also be involved.

At the end of 2013, the Ticino electric company installed an extensive photovoltaic system of one thousand square meters on the roof of the HQ of Mendrisio. All the energy produced is fed into the local distribution network. In exchange for our contribution, we buy energy which is 100% certified as coming from renewable energy sources from the same network.

The creation of a smart-working environment at Sintetica has also been achieved thanks to a whole series of measures and offers designed to ensure the wellbeing of its employees, with an ongoing focus on environmental sustainability. In this sense, alternative solutions to individual car journeys to and from work have been studied and then implemented on the basis of a Corporate Mobility Plan. They include season tickets for public transport, shuttle buses between company sites, car pooling and electric bikes. Sintetica offers its employees substantial financial contributions towards each of these solutions.

Its commitment to slow mobility is also demonstrated by the fact that it offers free use of corporate electric bikes for work as well as for private and/or leisure use.

100% Energy from renewable sources.
In 2012, we proceeded to install an innovative heat recovery system produced by autoclaves, for the heating of the entire establishment. This solution allows us to heat up the site during the winter season (which can also be particularly rigid in this part of Switzerland), without having to resort to fossil fuel.

Both in Mendrisio and in Couvet we ensure that all waste products are sorted correctly and recycled properly. Furthermore, in Mendrisio electric car charging is made available for free, as well as the supply of two water springs (still/fizzy), thus eliminating the use of plastic bottles.

The Quality Assurance Department in 2016 completed the transition to a new form of management of its operational procedures, both in the headquarters of Mendrisio and in Couvet, by implementing the “eco sop” project. It is a solution of digitalization of the entire organisational and procedural structure (up to that time in printed form) necessary for the management of complex and detailed processes to ensure the highest possible level of quality of our products.

The 360-degree commitment of the company to improving the environmental profile of the activities is the sign of the active and reasoned participation in the collective effort to protect the environment for future generations. A task carried out with an attitude aimed at protecting the business from potential hazards, especially in the long run, and concerning financial and reputational risks. At the same time, these measures involve a reduction in operational costs. This is, therefore, a win-win approach, which is at the base of the corporate culture and the way of working of Sintetica.

Sintetica’s commitment to the environment is also evident in its work within the local community. One example of this is the fact that it took responsibility for designing and financing the landscaping of the large roundabout, constructed immediately opposite the Mendrisio site. The decision to plant a series of magnolia trees really helps to lessen the huge environmental and territorial impact of this road junction, but also sends out a strong message. Effectively speaking, the magnolia is a symbol of dignity and perseverance, while its flowers are considered a good omen.

In 2017, it resulted in 1 million kWh of renewable energy from Swiss hydropower plants, which covered all the firm’s requirements.

In terms of consumption, it is significant to note that, as was the case during the 2016/17 period, despite a strong increase in production (approx. 55%) and the addition of new production lines, there was a reduction in the cubic metres of water consumed per vial (approx. 4.2%).

What’s more, over the last five years there has been a significant reduction in CO₂ emissions, which have fallen from 453 tonnes to 395 (-13%), a figure that is even more noteworthy if we consider that drug production doubled during the same period.

Also in the production site of Couvet, NE, 100% of the electricity used, is certified as originating from local renewable sources.
The company, therefore, based on these principles, aims to establish long-lasting relationships with mutual benefits with its partners. It is the responsibility of each partner to be aligned and consistent with not only the laws, regulations and codes on industrial application but also the principles, expectations and the contractual terms of Sintetica. Sintetica is constantly expanding its global network of distributors to ensure that its products are available to the largest possible number of patients and health professionals in the world. The distribution network is strictly monitored on the basis of its own guidelines. The corporate structure is therefore connected to an extensive network of suppliers to ensure the research, production and distribution of innovative products worldwide. This complex and highly regulated system involves many different countries and cultures.

In the choice of suppliers, we are looking for innovative products, services and ideas that contribute to the dynamic business growth of the company. Therefore, we identify suppliers who share the commitment to sustainability by developing long-term relationships, with the aim of improving mutual business, as well as the world around them.

At this point, we should conclude with a very significant fact that summarises the existing alignment between goals, consequent actions and the degree of participation by the employees of Sintetica. The set of choices made so far records a 95% positive trust score within the internal survey conducted annually inside the company.
The Sintetica value proposition

The corporate culture of Sintetica and all the basic strategic choices so far analysed are firmly based on respect. Respect is, therefore, the core value of the company and it permeates across each and every employee.

The concept of respect is divided into three well-defined directions.

- It is expressed in relation to its employees, enhancing the different characteristics of each one, whether for work or as an individual, through activities which create a pleasant environment in which to work and express themselves. (Great Place to Work)
- This same concept is also expressed towards the patients using Sintetica drugs worldwide, providing them with the highest quality products and investing in innovation to imagine the best care solutions for the future.
- Consequently, it materialises towards its local and global partners, showing them loyalty, absolute ethics and both operational and development support of advanced go to market strategies.

The convergence of these three well-defined areas make up the Sintetica Value Proposition.

It goes beyond corporate boundaries and is a distinctive and strategic element of its own identity in the wide world panorama of the pharmaceutical industry.

Thus, Sintetica not only exports drugs of the highest quality throughout the world, but also the sum of the value these drugs deliver to society.

The latter, shared by its network of global business partners, gives the company from Ticino unique characteristics in their approach to markets and profound value in the in-depth strategic positioning of the Company/Product.
“Sintetica takes its obligation to meet the highest standards of business ethics and integrity seriously. Meeting those standards is the responsibility of all our employees.”

Luca Bolzani