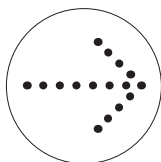


GREEN GOALS

Can protecting the planet be a sound business practice?

BY KARLIN SLOAN // ILLUSTRATION BY GETTY



"Tomorrow is today."
—Jeff Immelt, CEO, GE

SHOULD BUSINESS LEADERS CARE ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT?

Absolutely. No matter what you believe about global warming, every business depends on our earth to supply it with what it needs to thrive—the raw materials that make up your furnishings, the energy that fuels your operation or the manpower that drives your economic engine. Like it or not, we all need to care about what's happening to our environment. As business leaders, it's time to address both the risks and opportunities of our current global reality.

It is finally being widely accepted that businesses can and must do something about global problems like climate change—and that doing so means better business.

Many organizations are surprised that taking action to cut emissions or "go green" can spur the development of innovative technologies, reduce operating costs, enhance worker morale, increase access to capital, enhance a brand and build value.

Critical to all our business efforts: Consumers have begun to demand environmentally friendly and socially responsible products. According to the Global Market Institute, 42 percent of Americans are willing to spend more for products branded as organic, environmentally friendly or fair trade (50 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds, 37 percent of 45- to 64-year-olds).

In addition to meeting consumer demand, organizations are finding that going green reduces costs. Xerox estimates \$2 billion in savings through


eco-design and manufacturing, in addition to keeping 1.2 billion pounds of electronic waste out of landfills (source: greenbiz.com, 2002).

Doing good can also mean doing well financially. Over a five-year period, the Dow Jones Group Sustainability Index (DJGSI) performed an average of 36.1 percent better than the traditional Dow Jones Group Index (DJGI).

WHO ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HIGH-PROFILE LEADERS COMMITTED TO SUSTAINABILITY?

Wal-Mart CEO Scott Lee has taken the retail giant in a new direction. Not known for social responsibility in the recent past, Wal-Mart has become a market leader in emissions reduction, cost savings and customer opportunities. The company now requires all of its suppliers to focus on becoming more environmentally sustainable through packaging reduction, emissions reduction and reporting on their progress regularly to the Wal-Mart team.

Toyota has taken the idea of conservation into its factories: The company uses one production line to make multiple vehicle types, a move that has helped reduce energy usage in the factory 30 percent since 2000.

Apple Computer recently came under fire for its perceived lack of commitment to the environment. In May 2007, CEO Steve Jobs announced that as Apple crossed the threshold of selling its hundred millionth iPod, the company would expand its iPod take-back and recycling programs. Apple will now, like many of its competitors, start providing annual reports on environmental impact. 



WHAT DOES GOING GREEN DO FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

- ➔ Improves employee morale and the health of the workplace.
- ➔ Builds a marketing edge over your competition.
- ➔ Strengthens your bottom line through improved operating efficiencies.
- ➔ Creates public awareness of your company's social contribution above and beyond your product or service.



simple steps to take

- 1 Reduce paper usage: Go online to share information and store documents.
- 2 Buy products with reduced packaging; reduce packaging for your products.
- 3 Recycle.
- 4 Switch to fluorescent/energy-saving light bulbs.
- 5 Shut down appliances and lights on the weekends.
- 6 Encourage carpooling or biking to work.
- 7 Buy supplies from environmentally conscious vendors.
- 8 Invest in alternative energy sources: Save money and get tax breaks for doing so.



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