

Sustainable Systems at Work

"At the end of the day, the role of business is to generate prosperity and a better quality of life for everyone... we should never operate at the expense of the earth or societies or future generations."

—Ray Anderson

SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS AT WORK IS A FIVE-SESSION DISCUSSION COURSE FOR THE WORKPLACE, DESIGNED TO FURTHER ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES.

PARTICIPANTS IN THIS DISCUSSION COURSE WILL:

- Evaluate the current economic model and consider the case for change
- Examine the concept of sustainability from an organizational perspective
- Evaluate principles and frameworks for guiding a vision
- Identify tools and strategies for implementing a framework
- Develop an action plan to advance organizational change



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SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS AT WORK

DISCUSSION COURSE DESCRIPTION

SESSION THEME	GOALS	READINGS
Seeing the Big Picture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the case for sustainability from a social, ecological and economic perspective • Compare “Industrial Age” thinking with a systems thinking approach • Identify the threats and opportunities current global trends present for your organization • Identify actions to reduce energy use and promote efficiency 	<p><i>Bridge at the Edge of the World</i> by James Gustave Speth</p> <p>“Seeing the Whole Picture” by Peter M. Senge, Joe Laur, Bryan Smith, Nina Kruschwitz, and Sara Schley</p> <p>“Hug Shareholders, Not Just Trees” by Thomas L. Friedman</p> <p>“Why is Sustainability a Strategic Issue?” by Darcy Hitchcock and Marsha Willard</p> <p>Video: “Ray Anderson on Sustainability” by Mark Achbar, Jennifer Abbott, and Joel Bakan</p> <p>TAKING ACTION: Energy Use</p>
Taking a Closer Look	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate different views of what constitutes a sustainable business • Examine the concept of “sustainable consumerism” • Consider the potential for eco-design and innovation in creating a sustainable organization • Identify actions that address the impact of materials used and waste generated 	<p>“The Roots of Sustainability” by John R. Ehrenfeld</p> <p>“Taboo Talk in Green Business: Buy Less Stuff” by Joel Makower</p> <p>“15 Minutes with Hannah Jones” by Jim Phills</p> <p>“The Extravagant Gesture” by William McDonough and Michael Braungart</p> <p>TAKING ACTION: Materials and Waste</p>
Framing Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider sustainability frameworks and evaluate for potential fit within your organization • Examine case studies of successful strategies and implementation • Identify the “nature’s services” your organization depends upon • Identify actions to reduce fossil fuel consumption used in transportation 	<p>“The Triple bottom Line” by Darcy Hitchcock and Marsha Willard</p> <p>“ShoreBank: The Little Bank That Could” by Ben Cohen and Mal Warwick</p> <p>The Natural Step Framework and case studies</p> <p>“Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution” by Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins, and Hunter Lovins</p> <p>“(No) Drill Baby Drill” by Thomas L. Friedman</p> <p>TAKING ACTION: Transportation</p>
Seeing it Through	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify qualities, tools and resources needed for the transition to sustainability • Consider the potential for employees to take leadership roles in promoting sustainability • Consider one’s personal sphere of influence and the power to make change • Identify actions to conserve water and promote a more sustainable food system 	<p>“Creating a Culture of Sustainability” by Andrew Savitz</p> <p>“Leading from the Middle: The Power of the Green Champion” by Judith Nemes</p> <p>“Five Guiding Principles” by William McDonough and Michael Braungart</p> <p>“Earth’s Innovators” by Dashka Slater</p> <p>“The Power of One” by Ray Anderson</p> <p>TAKING ACTION: Food and Water</p>
Focusing on Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, prioritize and plan for integration of sustainability goals 	