



Five steps towards leading a more sustainable workplace

More companies are realizing the business value of developing a corporate sustainability strategy to improve their social and environmental impact - as well as their financial performance. The challenge for many, however, lies in embedding their sustainability goals into a business and workplace strategy. For example, 72% of companies who have signed up to the UN Sustainable Development Goals mention them in their reporting, but just 27% include them in their business strategy.¹

BSR and GlobeScan's annual sustainable business survey also reveals that despite a continued focus from business leaders and rising investor interest, little has changed in the level of self-reported integration of sustainability into the core of a business.² The current global landscape offers an opportunity for this to change. Nine out of 10 businesses (91%) worldwide see recovery efforts from the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to make their operations more environmentally sustainable.³

So, what are the steps your business can take to embed workplace strategies that deliver tangible results and reflect a growing commitment to sustainability? We outline five practical actions that can help you walk the talk.





01. Develop a sustainability roadmap

What does sustainability look like for your business? How can it be achieved and maintained? What are the opportunities for innovation? How will you measure success? These are just some of the questions that require answers - and developing a sustainability roadmap will help to shape your strategy for action.

A sustainability roadmap forms the basis of your strategy. It identifies the risks and opportunities and includes measurable goals to help monitor progress.

All good strategies are underpinned by a business case and, in the case of sustainability, the business benefits are clear. Research shows more than half of consumers said they would pay more for sustainable products designed to be reused or recycled.⁴ Employees also indicate they are more attracted to organizations with a commitment to sustainable practices or initiatives, with 61% believing sustainability is mandatory for modern businesses.⁵

Before you start to change business models to reduce waste and energy consumption and empower employees to be part of the journey, map out your strategy for embedding sustainability in the business.



02. Make an immediate impact in the workplace

In addition to the energy efficiency of your business output, look inside your own business at your daily operations and see where you can make changes.

Reducing energy consumption is a key component of a sustainability strategy. Choose energy efficient lighting, reduce 'on' time of lighting and electronic equipment and measure your energy consumption to identify inefficiencies.

In a Global Market Insight Survey, 72% of businesses surveyed already operate several paper-free business processes and 52% indicate that paper digitization will be very important by 2025.⁶ With 78% of businesses recognizing printing as still important to daily business operations⁷, investing in modern print technology which creates a seamless bridge in paper to digital workflows is a great solution.

There are many opportunities to join the circular economy by reusing and recycling products you no longer use and putting them back into your business or supply chain. Seek opportunities for reuse, remanufacturing and refurbishment and place value on longevity.

03. Educate and empower your employees

To be successful, your sustainability strategy requires the support and input of your entire workforce. Educating staff on company sustainability initiatives and how their daily actions can have an impact on the business, the community, and the planet can empower them to work with you to achieve your goals.

Let staff know turning off equipment such as printers and copiers and activating system standbys can greatly reduce monthly energy expenses and therefore your organization's carbon footprint. Providing ongoing training and clear communications on how their behavior contributes to your goals can lead to higher productivity in the workplace. The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Living Planet @ Work Program is an engagement platform that helps businesses to get started in engaging their employees on sustainability, providing free resources and ideas to lead sustainable initiatives at work.⁸ We know employees want to work with purpose - it makes sense then, that organizations with a clear commitment to sustainability have a competitive edge. They are well positioned to attract the best talent and can leverage long and short-term benefits of a team committed to a sustainable future.





04. Examine your supply chain

To help build a smooth path to sustainable practices - and to protect and enhance your reputation - ensure your current and future suppliers share your commitment to environmental, social and governance (ESG) outcomes.

During the procurement process of new suppliers, ask questions about ESG performance. Much of this information should be readily available from the suppliers, for example, information on product life-cycle and environmental impact. Consider whether products use sustainable packaging, or if the supplier has sustainability or carbon neutral certification. Look for carbon footprint goals and identify what percentage of the product is ocean-bound post-consumer. It is also valuable to consider whether your existing supply chain includes considerations to ensure the sourcing of materials from ethical suppliers. Employing stringent processes for sustainable procurement can also reduce your operating expenses, including the true costs of water, carbon, and raw materials. Reducing these resource costs can improve operating profits by up to 60%.⁹

There is assistance available - the World Wildlife Fund, in partnership with HP, has developed a useful [resource](#) with insights and actionable steps to help businesses learn about the importance of sustainable procurement to lead their company forward on its sustainable procurement journey.¹⁰

05.

Assess and reduce your entire carbon footprint

Measuring your carbon emissions is not a new idea - but it is still an essential part of a sustainability strategy. It offers a consistent, accurate and transparent look at the amount of carbon your business creates and helps you create a strategy for reducing your CO2 emissions.

Creating a strategy can help you identify immediate, simple ways to reduce your carbon emissions such as investing in energy efficient technologies. By replacing older, less eco-friendly equipment with newer models, (such as printers), operating costs and business produced carbon emissions can be reduced through optimized energy and supplies usage. Recycling and reusing waste products also leads to reduction in emissions.

Long-term, you can be part of the bigger sustainability picture by setting science-based goals and tackling more challenging carbon reduction opportunities. For emissions that cannot be reduced, partnering with the right carbon offset programs can do more than mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. Carbon offset investments can create immense social impact by inspiring your employees and strengthening communities vulnerable to unsustainable practices.

Speak to a HP representative or visit www.hp.com/go/MPSCarbonNeutral

References

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