

8.1: Sustainability as Incremental Improvements

It is not unusual for sustainability to be championed by one person, department, or division. If this is the case in your company, we applaud you for your initiative and foresight! Or perhaps there has not yet been any particular sustainability emphasis within your company and you wonder where to start. As such, we make these suggestions:

1. **Prove the business case.** Start with a small project in your division or department. Over time, refine the project so that it can be scaled and transferred to other areas of the company. Above all, make the business case by calculating the positive impacts and results of the project (often quantified in terms of savings, other improvements, or both).
2. **Establish a green team.** A green team can explore options for sustainability and identify the low-hanging fruit (easy-to-implement projects that are low cost but offer high returns). Work with others who share your vision for a sustainable workplace.
3. **Raise awareness.** Education and awareness are critical for change. Use a newsletter, Web site, discussion group, bulletin board, or other means of communication to publicize successes and educate others on sustainability impacts. One thing we have learned is that you must show people how sustainability (and its impacts) relates to them.

If your company has moved beyond the stage of sustainability as incremental improvements, then your company is well on its way toward embracing sustainability as **strategy**. We devote the rest of this chapter to a discussion of how sustainability is deeply embedded throughout the organization as a strategic priority of the company.

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