


Educate your employees to go green!

By Pavitra Sriprakash | Published: 10th December 2016 04:00 AM |

Last Updated: 09th December 2016 10:29 PM | [A+](#) [A](#) [A-](#) | 



Educate

How to help people make sustainable lifestyle choices? This is a permanent question for me and I have heard several compelling arguments in favour. There is no one way to get people to adopt a sustainable life or to continually make sustainable choices. These choices often require you to put the planet's health ahead of your convenience — a difficult choice indeed as most of us tend to take the easiest and most self-efficient way out.

I recall listening to Bill Clinton at one of the Sustainability Conferences in Chicago talking about the influence children have on overall sustainability of a family. He said that teaching environmental sensibilities at school causes change in the entire family, as kids go back to their houses with their 'eco-discipline', they inspire their parents to also make a change. Another approach that is widely used in large corporations with well established human resource groups is to put all employees through a sustainability training program that helps make 'eco-sensitive' decision making second nature within the office premises and beyond.

What does it mean to call oneself a sustainable corporation? What are the primary benefits to becoming a more sustainable company? Although each company has its own reasons and motives for being more green and sustainable there are some benefits that are widely associated with adopting an eco-conscious outlook in business — such as better branding, increased productivity with reduced costs, improved energy efficiency/resource management and lastly increased employee retention and recruitment. People want to associate with companies that are 'doing the right thing' and are engaged in CSR programmes. Engaging office-wide on energy-saving ideas and environmental passions, companies can save resources, energy and money as well as boost their eco-friendly reputation.

Across the world today, the expression "conscious consumer" is one more and more people are identifying with. A conscious consumer is one who is more likely to buy from companies that manufacture energy efficient products, promote health and safety benefits, support fair labour and trade practices and commit to environmentally-friendly methods; provided the products are of comparable quality and price. The key to all of us living sustainable lives is to help people change into conscious consumers. This happens by learning why sustainability matters in their lives, for example, climate change could sink your city and make it prone to natural disasters. If people realize this, they will find ways to save resources at work and at home.

A company could educate their employees at the grass-root level. Green teams, promoting eco-friendly challenges and teaching colleagues sustainable alternatives are a great way to kick start any eco initiative. Make a beginning by banning disposable utensils or going plastic-free for a week.

Is sustainability truly a desired corporate objective that contributes to your company's strategy? Does it positively affect employees, customers, partners and the surrounding community? It is time to consider training and inspiring people who work with you to be conscious consumers — the agents of change for the future of our planet!

Pavitra Sriprakash @pavisriprakash