

12. Transforming the Corporate Mindset

12 Steps in Developing
a “Green Plan”



Step 1: Why develop a Green Plan?

- Many companies seek to reduce waste by cutting costs, unproductive employees. Why not also cut manufacturing waste?
- Reduce regulatory pressure (EPA etc)
- It has worked in practice!



Step 2: Break barriers between govt. agencies & industry

Regulatory industries vs. Industry? Industry perceives the latter as imposing laws on them. Instead need to open lines of communication.

- Industry needs to work with govt. in drafting regulations before they become law
- Get to know your local agencies
- Use their services- seminars etc., and offer help



Step 3: Break down barriers between industry & the local community

- Educate people in the company, and stockholders, about what you are doing (Green Plan etc.)
- Open up facilities to the local community
- Work with suppliers, distributors, customers to get ideas for improvements



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Step 4: Get management support

- Identify who are the key decision-makers
- Explain final outcomes, not just details of the work involved
- Argue the case (enthusiastically!)-
 - It's the right thing to do
 - Helps ensure future compliance
 - Will save money
 - Essential for sustained company growth
- Ask for help on finance, communication, networking, management



Picture by NASA, public domain

Step 5: Get employee support

There may be fear or cynicism about programs

- Communicate the idea, appeal to their “better side”- clean air/water for their kids etc
- Try to win over key, respected employees.
- Use incentives such as free food, but don't use money



Step 6: Audit current programs & compliance status

- Examine the company's past env. record, land ownership, waste handling
- Study current practices on waste, pollution & regulations
- Consider possible future liability issues from company expansion, new products, changes in waste disposal or area near plant.



Step 7: Do research on what others have done

- Check magazines, award winners
- Look at ISO 14000 certified companies in the US at www.ansi.org
- Find out about cases of non-compliance-what went wrong?



Step 8: Put your environmental policy in writing

- Where do you want to be when plan is ready?
- Research others' env. policies (see handout)
- Afterwards, know the policy well (yourself)



Step 9: Set goals

Based on step 7 (research) and 8 (policy) you can set specific goals. Some examples-

- Vol. & cost of waste generated
- Vol. & cost of raw materials used
- Vol. of pollution generated
- Cost of compliance/pollution prevention
- No. of env. reports needed
- Employee or Env. risk if operations flawed
- Opportunity for recycling waste
- Opportunity to incorporate energy transfer



Step 10: Write the Green Plan(1)

- Open with your environmental policy & goals
- Set it up with clear lines of communication
- Consider the two ways to reduce waste:
 - Tailpipe treatment
 - Waste reduction at source
- Consider other issues- energy conservation, recycling, etc.
- Define the process (see next slide)



Step 10: Write the Green Plan(2)

You need to have the steps clearly defined in order to accomplish the work.

- Steps are specific tasks such as:
 - Research alternative raw materials
 - Train all employees on hauling waste
 - Speak to Chamber of Commerce on green plan
- Timetable- be realistic!
- Need key person and a plan for each step
- Performance measure (to monitor progress)



Step 11: Get feedback

- Talk to the community, regulatory agencies, and at seminars to get opinions.
- Categorize the feedback, and act on it when appropriate.



Step 12: Take actions to keep everyone interested

- Communicate within the company- this costs very little and maintains interest.
- Actions outside the company (community, or in trade magazines etc.) will raise the profile of the green plan.



Step 13: Get total company buy-in

When you're ready to implement the plan, you need to motivate people to do the work.

- The environmental experts will do the lion's share of the work. Try to have the other employees focus on the “fun” parts of the plan
- Use existing supervisors to “enforce” the regulations and get the work done.
- Attend dept. meetings, solicit & reward ideas.
- Maintain communication



Step 14: Market your Green Plan

- This should not be the reason for doing the plan, or it will be regarded cynically.
- However once tangible results have been achieved you may want to use positive data to help increase sales.
- Don't do this too soon- wait at least a year.



Step 15: Step back & look at the larger picture (1)

Review your plan. Some questions to ask:

- Were the goals on target?
- Was it too much work for employees?
- Did you break down barriers & win support?
- Has the company improved its environmental record?



Step 15: Step back & look at the larger picture (2)

Where next?

- If the original plan failed, find out why and try again.
- If the plan worked well, consider sticking with it & expanding it.
- Has the company shifted its focus as a result of the plan (e.g. new focus on LCA)?
- Consider ISO 14000.



Step 16: Find out about ISO 14000

Covered in unit 10. But remember

- ISO14000 conformance does not equal compliance, does not rule out EPA audits.
- Don't do it just for marketing reasons!
- Decide whether you want to go the route of "self declaration" or "third-party."



References

David J. Schell, *A Green Plan for Industry*,
Government Institutes, Inc, Rockville, MD
(1998)

